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THE HISTORY OF EGYPT.

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HISTORY OF EGYPT

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES

TILL THE CONQUEST BY THE ARABS

A.D. 640.

By SAMUEL SHARPE.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE WOODCUTS IN VOL. II.

On the title page.—The figure of Neith, the goddess of the heavens. Her name is spelt NT, followed by the arch of the heavens as the determinative sign.

Fig. 1. The name of Ptolemy Soter II. *Worshipper of the god Euergetes and of the god Philopator, son of the goddess Soter, approved by Pthah, like Ra, an image of Amun.*

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CLEOPATRA COCCE AND PTOLEMY SOTER II.; CLEOPATRA COCCE AND PTOLEMY ALEXANDER; PTOLEMY SOTER II.; CLEOPATRA BERENICE; PTOLEMY ALEXANDER II.; PTOLEMY NEUS DIONYSUS. B.C. 116—51.

(1) On the death of Ptolemy Euergetes II., his widow Cleopatra Cocce would have chosen her younger son, Ptolemy Alexander, then a child, for her partner on the throne, most likely because it would have been longer in the course of years before he would have claimed his share of power; but she was forced, by a threatened rising of the Alexandrians, to make her elder son king. Before, however, she would do this, she made a treaty with him, which would strongly prove, if anything were still wanting, the vice and meanness of the Egyptian court. It was, that, although married to his sister Cleopatra, of whom he was very fond, he should put her away, and marry his younger sister Selene; because the mother hoped that Selene would be false to her husband's cause, and weaken his party in the state by her treachery: she planned the unhappiness of two children and the guilt of a third. Perhaps history can hardly show another marriage so wicked and unnatural, or a reign so little likely to end without a civil war.

Justinus, lib. xxxix. 3. B.C. 116.

(2) Ptolemy took the name of Soter II., though he is more often called Lathyrus, from a stain upon his face in the form of a leaf, pricked into his skin in honour of Osiris (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, two forms of his name). He was also called Philometor; and we learn from an inscription on

a temple at Apollinopolis Parva, that both these names formed part of the style in which the public acts ran in this reign; it is dedicated by "the Queen Cleopatra and King Ptolemy, gods Philometores, Soteres, and his children," without mentioning his wife. Here, as in Persia and Judæa, the king's mother often held rank above his wife. The name of Philometor was given to him by his mother, because, though he had reached the years of manhood, she wished to act as his guardian; but her unkindness to him was so remarkable that historians have thought that it was a nickname. The mother and the son were jointly styled sovereigns of Egypt; but they lived apart, and in distrust of one another, each surrounded by his own friends; while Cleopatra's stronger mind and greater skill in kingcraft gained for her the larger share of power. Can we wonder that under such heads the monarchy was tottering to its fall?

Pausanias, lib. i. 9. Inscript. Letronne, Recherches.

Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

(3) Cleopatra the daughter, who gained our pity for being put away by her husband at the command of her mother, soon forfeited it by the steps which she then took. She made a treaty of marriage with Antiochus Cyzicenus, the friend of her late husband, who was struggling in unnatural warfare for the throne of Syria with his brother Antiochus Grypus, the husband of her sister Tryphæna; and in her way to Syria she stopped at Cyprus, where she raised a large army and took it with her as her dower, to help her new husband against his brother and her sister.

Justinus, lib. xxxix. 3.

(4) With this addition to his army Cyzicenus thought his forces equal to those of his brother; he marched against him and gave him battle. But he was beaten, and he fled with his wife Cleopatra; and they shut themselves up in the city of Antioch. Grypus and Tryphæna then laid siege to the city, and Tryphæna soon took her revenge on her sister for coming into Syria to marry the brother and rival of her husband. The city was taken; and Tryphæna ordered her

sister to be torn from the temple into which she had fled, and to be put to death. In vain Grypus urged that he did not wish his victory to be stained by the death of a sister; that Cleopatra was by marriage his sister as well as hers; that she was the aunt of their children; and that the gods would punish them if they dragged her from the altar. But Tryphæna was merciless and unmoved; she gave her own orders to the soldiers; and Cleopatra was killed as she clung with her arms to the statue of the goddess. This unnatural cruelty, however, was soon overtaken by punishment; in the next battle Cyzicenus was the conqueror, and he put Tryphæna to death, to quiet the ghost of her murdered sister.

(5) In the third year of her reign Cleopatra Cocce gave the island of Cyprus to her younger son Alexander, as an independent kingdom, thinking that he would be of more use to her there, in upholding her power against his brother Lathyrus, than he could be at Alexandria. Porphyrius, ap. Scalig. B.C. 114. Pausanias, lib. i. 9.

(6) In the last reign Eudoxus had been intrusted by Euergetes with a vessel and a cargo for a trading voyage of discovery towards India; and in this reign he was again sent by Cleopatra down the Red Sea to trade with the unknown countries in the east. How far he went may be doubted, but he brought back with him from the coast of Africa the prow of a ship ornamented with a horse's head, the usual figure-head of the Carthaginian ships. This he showed to the Alexandrian pilots, who knew it as belonging to one of the Phenician ships of Cadiz or Gibraltar. Eudoxus justly argued that this prow proved that it was possible to sail round Africa, and to reach India by sea from Alexandria. The government, however, would not fit him out for a third voyage; but his reasons were strong enough to lead many to join him, and others to help him with money, and he thereby fitted out three vessels on this attempt to sail round Africa by the westward voyage. He passed the Pillars of Hercules, or Straits of Gibraltar, and then turned southward. He even reached that part of Africa where the coast turns eastward. Here he was stopped by his ships wanting repair. The only knowledge that he brought back for us is, that the natives of that western coast Strabo, lib. ii.

were of nearly the same race as the Ethiopians on the eastern coast. He was able to sail only part of the way back, and he reached Mauritania with difficulty by land. He thence returned home, where he met with the fate not unusual to early travellers. His whole story was doubted; and the geographers at home did not believe that he had ever visited the countries that he attempted to describe.

(7) The people of Lower Egypt were, as we have seen, of several races; and, as each of the surrounding nations was in its turn powerful, that race of men was uppermost in Lower Egypt. Before the fall of Thebes the Copts ruled in the Delta; when the free states of Greece held the first rank in the world, even before the time of Alexander's conquests, the Greeks of Lower Egypt were masters of their fellow-countrymen; and now that Judæa, under the bravery of the Maccabees, had gained among nations a rank far higher than what its size entitled it to, the Egyptian Jews found that they had in the same way gained weight in Alexandria. Cleopatra had given the command of her army to two Jews, Chelcias and Ananias, the sons of Onias, the priest of Heliopolis; and hence, when the civil war broke out between the Jews and Samaritans, Cleopatra helped the Jews, and perhaps for that same reason Lathyrus helped the Samaritans. He sent six thousand men to his friend Antiochus Cyzicenus to be led against the Jews, but this force was beaten by the two sons of Hyrcanus the high priest.

Josephus, Antiq. xiii. 18.

(8) By this act Lathyrus must have lost the good-will of the Jews of Lower Egypt, and hence Cleopatra again ventured to choose her own partner on the throne. She raised a riot in Alexandria against him, in the tenth year of their reign, on his putting to death some of her friends, or more likely, as Pausanias says, by showing to the people some of her eunuchs covered with blood, who she said were wounded by him; and she forced him to fly from Egypt. She took from him his wife Selene, whom she had before thrust upon him, and who had borne him two children; and allowed him to withdraw to the kingdom of Cyprus, from which she recalled her favourite son Alexander to reign with her in Egypt (see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4, Cleopatra and Alexander).

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Justinus, lib. xxxix. 4.

(9) During these years the building was going forward of the beautiful temple at the city, afterwards named by the Romans Contra-Latopolis, on the other side of the Nile from Latopolis or Esne (see Fig. 5). Little now remains of it but its massive portico, upheld by two rows of four columns each, having the sun with outstretched wings carved on the overhanging eaves. The earliest names found among the hieroglyphics with which its walls are covered are those of Cleopatra Cocce, and her son Ptolemy Soter, while the latest name is that of the Emperor Commodus. Even under Cleopatra Cocce, who was nearly the worst of the family, the building of these great temples did not cease.

Wilkinson, Thebes. Denon, pl. 53.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

(10) The two sons were so far puppets in the hands of their clever but wicked mother, that on the recall of Alexander, no change was seen in the government beyond that of the names which were placed at the head of the public acts. The former year was called the tenth of Cleopatra and Ptolemy Soter, and this year was called the eleventh of Cleopatra, and eighth of Ptolemy Alexander; as Alexander counted his years from the time when he was sent with the title of king to Cyprus. As he was, like his brother, under the guidance

B.C. 106.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

of his mother, he was like him in the hieroglyphical inscriptions called *mother-loving*.

(11) While the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria were alike weakened by civil wars, and by the vices of their kings, Judæa, as we have seen, had risen under the wise government of the Maccabees to the rank of an independent state; and latterly Aristobulus, the eldest son of Hyrcanus, and afterwards Alexander Jannæus, his second son, had made themselves kings. But Gaza, Ptolemais, and some other cities, bravely refused to part with their liberty, and sent to Lathyrus, then king of Cyprus, for help. This was not, however, done without many misgivings; for some were wise enough to see that, if Lathyrus helped them, Cleopatra would, on the other hand, help their king Jannæus; and when Lathyrus landed at Sicaminos with thirty thousand men, the citizens of Ptolemais refused even to listen to a message from him.

Josephus, Antiq. xiii. 20.

(12) The city of Gaza then eagerly sent for the help which the city of Ptolemais refused. Lathyrus drove back Jannæus, and marched upon Asochis, a city of Galilee, where he scaled the walls on the sabbath-day, and took ten thousand prisoners, and a large booty. He then sat down before the city of Saphoris, but left it on hearing that Jannæus was marching against him on the other side of the Jordan, at the head of a force larger than his own. He crossed the river in face of the Jewish army, and routed it with great slaughter. The Jewish historian adds, that between thirty and fifty thousand men were slain upon the field of battle, and that the women and children of the neighbouring villages were cruelly put to death.

Josephus, Antiq. xiii. 21.

(13) Cleopatra now began to fear that her son Lathyrus would soon make himself too powerful, if not checked in his career of success, and that he might be able to march upon Egypt. She therefore mustered her forces, and put them under the command of Chelcias and Ananias, her Jewish generals. She sent her treasure, her will, and the children of Alexander, to the island of Cos, as a place of safety, and then marched with the army into Palestine, having sent forward her son Alexander with the fleet. By this movement Lathyrus was unable to keep his ground in Cœle-Syria, and he took the bold step of marching towards Egypt. But he

was quickly followed by Chelcias, and his army was routed, though Chelcias lost his life in the battle. Cleopatra, after taking Ptolemais, sent part of her army to help that which had been led by Chelcias; and Lathyrus was forced to shut himself up in Gaza. Soon after this the campaign ended, by Lathyrus returning to his own kingdom of Cyprus, and Cleopatra to Egypt.

(14) On this success, Cleopatra was advised to seize upon the throne of Jannæus, and again to add to Egypt the provinces of Palestine and Cœle-Syria, which had so long made part of the kingdom of her forefathers. We may be quite sure that this cruel overbearing woman, who had never yet been guided by any feeling of right or dislike for war, did not yield to the reasons of her general Ananias through any kind feeling towards his countrymen; but the Jews of Lower Egypt were too strong to be treated with slight; it was by the help of the Jews that Cleopatra had driven her son Lathyrus out of Egypt; they formed a large part of the Egyptian armies, which were no longer even commanded by Greeks; and it must have been by these clear and unanswerable reasons that Ananias was able to turn the queen from the thoughts of this conquest, and to renew the league between Egypt and Judæa.

(15) Cleopatra, however, was still afraid that Lathyrus would be helped by his friend, Antiochus Cyzicenus, to conquer Egypt, and she therefore kept up the quarrel between the brothers by again sending troops to help Antiochus Grypus; and lastly, she gave him in marriage her daughter Selene, whom she had before forced upon Lathyrus. She then sent an army against Cyprus; and Lathyrus was beaten and forced to fly from the island. Cleopatra then put to death the general because he had allowed her son to escape alive. Justinus, lib. xxxix. 4.

(16) In the middle of this reign died Ptolemy Apion, king of Cyrene. He was the half-brother of Lathyrus and Alexander, and having been made king of Cyrene by his father, Euergetes II., he had there reigned quietly for twenty years. Being between Egypt and Carthage, then called the Roman province of Africa, and having no army which he could lead against the Roman legions, he had placed himself under the guardianship Livy, Epit. lxx. B.C. 97.

of Rome; he had bought a truce during his lifetime, by making the Roman people his heirs in his will, so that on his death they were to have his kingdom. Cyrene had been part of Egypt for above two hundred years, and was usually governed by a younger son or brother of the king. But on the death of Ptolemy Apion, the Roman senate, who had latterly been grasping at everything within their reach, claimed his kingdom as their inheritance, and in the flattering language of their decree by which the country was enslaved, they declared Cyrene free; and from that time forward it was little better than a province of Rome.

(17) Ptolemy Alexander, who had been a mere tool in the hands of his mother, was at last tired of his gilded chains; but he saw no means of throwing them off, or of gaining that power in the state which his birth and title, and the age which he had then reached, ought to have given him. The army was in favour of his mother, and an unsuccessful effort would certainly have been punished with death; so he took perhaps the only path open to him, he left Egypt by stealth, and chose rather to quit his throne and palace than to live surrounded by the creatures of his mother, and in daily fear for his life.

Justinus, lib. xxxix. 4.

(18) Cleopatra might well doubt whether she could keep her throne against both her sons, and she therefore sent messengers with fair promises to Alexander, to ask him to return to Egypt. But he knew his mother too well ever again to trust himself in her hands; and while she was taking steps to have him put to death on his return, he formed a plot against her life by letters. In this double game Alexander had the advantage of his mother; her character was so well known that he needed not to be told of what was going on; while she perhaps thought that the son, whom she had so long ruled as a child, would not dare to act as a man. Alexander's plot was of the two the best laid, and on his reaching Egypt his mother was put to death. Thus died, by the orders of her favourite son, after a reign of twenty-eight years, this wicked woman, who had married the husband of her mother, who had made her daughters marry and leave their husbands at her pleasure, who had made war upon one son, and had plotted the death of the other.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

(19) But Alexander did not long enjoy the fruits of his murder. The next year the Alexandrians rose against him in a fury. He was hated not so much perhaps for the murder of his mother, as for the cruelties which he had been guilty of, or at least had to bear the blame of, while he reigned with her. His own soldiers turned against him, and he was forced to seek his safety by flying on board a vessel in the harbour, and he left Egypt with his wife and daughter. He was followed by a fleet under the command of Tyrrhus, but he reached Myræ, a city of Lycia, in safety; and afterwards, in crossing over to Cyprus, he was met by an Egyptian fleet under Chæreas, and killed in battle.

Justinus, lib. xxxix. 5.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

B.C. 87.

(20) Though others may have been guilty of more crimes, Alexander had perhaps the fewest good qualities of any of the family of the Lagidæ. During his idle reign of twenty years, in which the crimes ought in fairness to be laid chiefly to his mother, he was wholly given up to the lowest and worst of pleasures, by which his mind and body were alike ruined. He was so bloated with vice and disease that he seldom walked without crutches; but at his feasts he could leap from his raised couch, and dance with naked feet upon the floor with the companions of his vices. He was blinded by flattery, ruined by debauchery, and hated by the people.

Athenæus, lib. xii. 12.

(21) His coins are not easily known from those of the other kings, which also bore the name of "*Ptolemy the king*" round the eagle. Some of the coins of his mother have the same words round the eagle on the one side, while on the other is her head, with a helmet formed

Visconti, Icon. Grec.

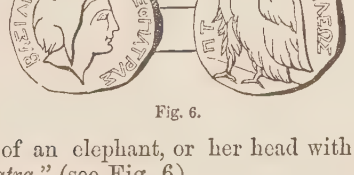


Fig. 6.

like the head of an elephant, or her head with the name of "*Queen Cleopatra*" (see Fig. 6).

British Museum. There are other coins with the usual head of Jupiter, and with two eagles, to point out the joint sovereignty of herself and son (see Fig. 7).

Fig. 7.

(22) Few buildings or parts of buildings mark the reign of Ptolemy Alexander; but his name is not wholly unknown among the sculptures of Upper Egypt. On the walls of the temple of Apollinopolis Magna he is represented as making an offering to the god Horus. There the Egyptian artist has carved a portrait of this Greek king, whom he perhaps had never seen, clothed in a dress which he never wore, and worshipping a god whom he may have hardly known by name (see Fig. 8).

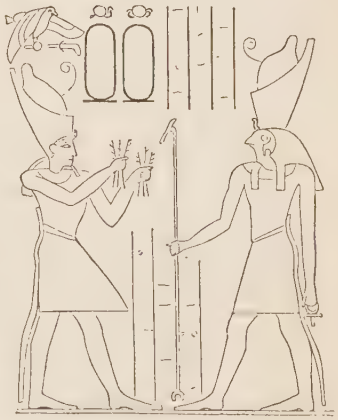


Fig. 8.

(23) History has not told us who was the first wife of Alexander, but he left a son by her, named after himself, Ptolemy Alexander, whom we have seen sent by his grandmother for safety to the island of Cos, the fortress of the family, and a daughter, whom he carried with him in his flight to Lycia. His second wife was Cleopatra Berenice, the daughter of his brother

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Lathyrus, by whom he had no children, and who is called in the hieroglyphics his queen and sister. Wilkinson, Thebes.

(24) On the flight of Alexander, the Alexandrians sent an embassy to Cyprus to bring back Soter II., or Lathyrus, as he is called; and he entered Egypt without opposition. He had before reigned ten years with his mother, and then eighteen years by himself in Cyprus; and during those years of banishment had shown a wisdom and good behaviour which must have won the esteem of the Alexandrians, when compared with his younger brother Alexander. He had held his ground against the fleets and armies of his mother, but either through weakness or good feeling had never invaded Egypt. Porphyrius, ap. Scalig. B.C. 87.

(25) His reign is remarkable for the rebellion and ruin of the once powerful city of Thebes. It had long been falling in trade and in wealth, and had lost its superiority in arms; but its temples, like so many citadels, its obelisks, its colossal statues, and the tombs of its great kings, still remained, and with them the memory of its glory then gone by. The hieroglyphics on the walls still recounted to its fallen priests and nobles the provinces in Europe, Asia, and Africa, which they once governed, and the weight of gold, silver, and corn, which these provinces sent as a yearly tribute. The paintings and sculptures still showed the men of all nations and of all colours, from the Tartar of the north to the Negro of the south, who had graced the triumphs of their kings; and with these proud trophies before their eyes they had been bending under the yoke of Euergetes II. and Cleopatra Cocce for above fifty years. So small a measure of justice has usually been dealt out to a conquered people by their rulers, that their highest hopes have risen to nothing more than an escape from excess of tyranny. If life, property, female honour, national and religious feelings have not been constantly and wantonly outraged, lesser evils have been patiently endured. Political servitude, heavy taxes, daily ill-treatment, and occasional cruelty, the Thebans had borne for two centuries and a half under their Greek masters, as no less the lot of humanity than poverty, disease, and death. But under the government of Cleopatra Cocce the measure of their injuries overflowed, and taking advantage of the Tacitus, Annal. ii.

revolutions in Alexandria. a large part of Upper Egypt rose in rebellion.

Pausanias, lib. i. 9.

(26) We can therefore hardly wonder that when Lathyrus landed in Egypt and tried to recall the troubled cities to quiet government and good order, Thebes should have refused to obey. The spirit of the warriors who followed Rameses to the shores of the Black Sea was not quite dead. For three years the brave Copts, entrenched within their temples, every one of which was a castle, withstood his armies; but the bows, the hatchets, and the chariots could do little against Greek arms; while the

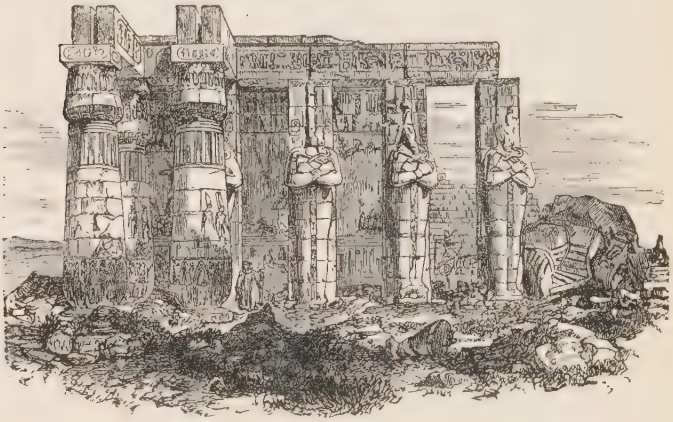


Fig. 9.

overthrow of the massive temple walls, and the utter ruin of the city, prove how slowly they yielded to greater skill and numbers, and mark the conqueror's distrust lest the temples should be again so made use of (see the ruins of the Memnonium, Fig. 9, and the ruins of Quorneh, Fig. 10). Perhaps the only time before when Thebes had been stormed after a long siege was when it first fell under the Persians; and the ruin which marked the footsteps of Cambyses had never been wholly repaired. But the wanton cruelty of the foreigners did little mischief, when compared with the unpitying and unforgiving distrust of the native conquerors.

The temples of Tentyra, Apollinopolis, Latopolis, and Philæ show that the massive Egyptian buildings, when let alone, can withstand the wear of time for thousands of years; but

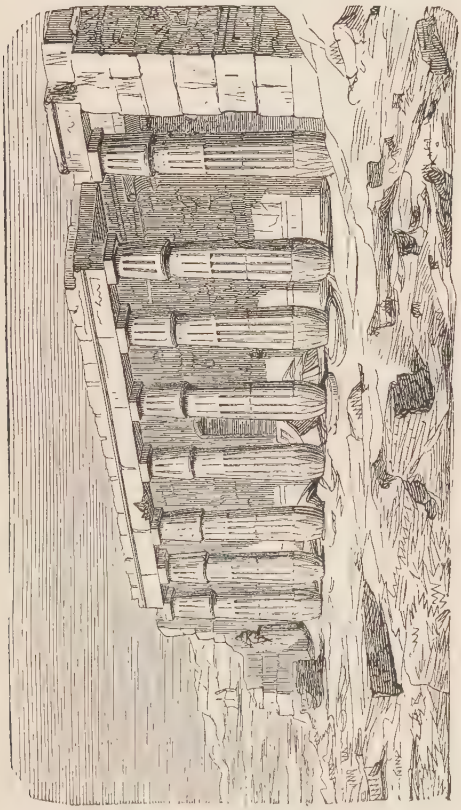


Fig. 10.—The Temple of Rebek, or Quorneh.

the harder hand of man works much faster, and the wide acres of Theban ruins prove alike the greatness of the city and the force with which it was overthrown; and this is the last time that Egyptian Thebes is met with in the pages

of history. The traveller, whose means and leisure have allowed him to reach a spot which all of us would be delighted to visit, now counts the Arab villages which have been built within the city's bounds, and perhaps pitches his tent in the open space in the middle of them. But the ruined temples still stand to call forth his wonder. They have seen the whole portion of time of which history keeps the reckoning roll before them; they have seen kingdoms and nations rise and fall; the Babylonians, the Jews, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. They have seen the childhood of all that we call ancient; and they still seem likely to stand, to tell their tale to those who will hereafter call us the ancients. After this rebellion, Lathyrus reigned in quiet, and was even able to be of use to his Greek allies; and the Athenians, in gratitude, set up statues of bronze to him and Berenice, his daughter.

Pausanias, lib. i. 9.

(27) During this reign, the Romans were carrying on a war with Mithridates, king of Pontus, in Asia Minor; and Sylla, who was then at the head of the republic, sent Lucullus, the soldier, the scholar, and the philosopher, as ambassador to Alexandria, to ask for help against the enemy. The Egyptian fleet moved out of harbour to meet him, a pomp which the kings of Egypt had before kept for themselves alone. Lathyrus received him on shore with the greatest respect, lodged him in the palace, and invited him to his own table, an honour which no foreigner had enjoyed since the kings of Egypt had thrown aside the plain manners of the first Ptolemies. Lucullus had brought with him the philosopher Antiochus of Athens, who had been the pupil of Philo, and they found time to enjoy the society of Dion, the academic philosopher, who was then teaching at Alexandria; and there they might have been seen with Heraclitus of Tyre, talking together about the changes which were creeping into the Platonic philosophy, and about the two newest works of Philo, which had just come to Alexandria. Antiochus could not read them without showing his anger; such opinions had never before been heard of in the Academy; but they knew the handwriting of Philo, they were certainly his. Scius and Tetrilius, who were there, had heard him teach the same opinions at Rome, whither he had

Plutarch. Vit. Lucull.

Cicero, Acad. iv. 4.

fled, and where he was then teaching Cicero. The next day, the matter was again talked over with Lucullus, Heraclitus, Aristus of Athens, Ariston, and Dion; and it ended in Antiochus writing a book, which he named Sosus, against those new opinions of his old master, against the new Academy, and in behalf of the old Academy.

(28) Lathyrus understood the principles of the balance of power and his own interest too well to help the Romans to crush Mithridates, and he wisely wished not to quarrel with either. He therefore at once made up his mind not to grant the fleet which Lucullus had been sent to ask for. It had been usual for the kings of Egypt to pay the expenses of the Roman ambassadors while living in Alexandria; and Lathyrus offered four times the usual allowance to Lucullus, beside eighty talents of silver. Lucullus, however, would take nothing beyond his expenses, and returned the gifts which were meant as a civil refusal of the fleet; and, having failed in his embassy, he sailed hastily for Cyprus, leaving the wonders of Egypt unvisited. Lathyrus sent a fleet of honour to accompany him on his voyage, and gave him his portrait cut in an emerald. Mithridates was soon afterwards conquered by the Romans; and it was only by skilful embassies and well-timed bribes that Lathyrus was able to keep off the punishment which seemed to await him for having thus disobeyed the orders of Sylla. Egypt was then the only kingdom, to the west of Persia, that had not yet bowed its neck under the Roman yoke.

Plutarch. Vit. Lucull.

Sallustius, Epistola Mithrid.

(29) The coins of Lathyrus are not easily or certainly known from those of the other Ptolemies; but those of his second wife bear her head on the one side, with the name of "*Queen Selene*," and on the other side the eagle, with the name of "*King Ptolemy*" (see Fig. 11). He had before reigned ten years with his mother, and after his brother's death he reigned six years and a half more; but, as he counted the years that he had reigned in Cyprus, he died in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. He left a daughter named Berenice, and two natural sons, each named Ptolemy, one of whom reigned in Cyprus, and the other, nicknamed Auletes, *the piper*, afterwards gained the throne of Egypt.

Visconti, Icon. Grec.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

(30) On the death of Lathyrus, or Ptolemy Soter II., his daughter, Cleopatra Berenice, the widow of Ptolemy Alexander, mounted the throne of Egypt; but it was also claimed by her step-son, the young Alexander, who was then living in Rome. Alexander had been sent to the island of Cos, as a place of safety, when his grandmother, Cleopatra Cocce, followed her army into Cœle-Syria. But, as the Egyptians had lost the command of the sea, the royal treasure in Cos was no longer out of danger; and the island was soon afterwards taken by Mithridates, king of Pontus, who had conquered Asia Minor. Among the treasures in that island the Alexandrians lost one of the sacred relics of the kingdom, the chlamys or war-cloak which had belonged to Alexander the Great, and which they

B.C. 80.

Appianus, Bell. Civ. i. 102.

Appianus, Bell. Mithr.

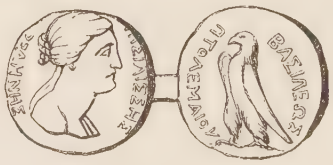


Fig. 11.

had kept with religious care as the safeguard of the empire. It then fell into the hands of Mithridates, and on his overthrow it became the prize of Pompey, who wore it in his triumph at the end of the Mithridatic war. With this chlamys, as had always been foretold by the believers in wonders, Egypt lost its rank among nations, and the command of the world passed to the Romans, its new owners. The young Alexander also at that time fell into the hands of Mithridates; but he afterwards escaped, and reached the army of Sylla, under whose care he lived for some time in Rome. The Alexandrian prince hoped to gain the throne of his father by means of the friendship of one who could make and unmake kings at his pleasure; and Sylla might have thought that the wealth of Egypt would be at his command by means of his young friend. To these reasons Alexander added the bribe which was then becoming common

with the princes who held their thrones by the help of Rome, he made a will, in which he named the Roman people as his heirs; and the senate then took care that the kingdom of Egypt should be a part of the wealth which was afterwards to be theirs by inheritance. After Berenice, his stepmother, had been queen about six months, they sent him to Alexandria, with orders that he should be received as king; and, to soften the harshness of this command, he was told to marry Berenice, and reign jointly with her (see Fig. 12).

Cicero, Ii. contr. Rullum.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Fig. 12.

(31) The orders of Sylla, the Roman dictator, were of course obeyed; and the young ALEXANDER landed at Alexandria, as king of Egypt and the friend of Rome. He married Berenice; and on the nineteenth day of his reign, with a cruelty unfortunately too common in this history, he put her to death. The marriage had been forced upon him by the Romans, who ordered all the political affairs of the kingdom; but, as they took no part in the civil or criminal affairs, he seems to have been at liberty to murder his wife. But Alexander was hated by the people as a king thrust upon them by foreign arms; and Berenice, whatever they might have before thought of her, was regretted as the queen of their choice. Hence his crime met with its just reward. His own guards immediately rose upon him; they dragged him from the palace to the gymnasium, and there put him to death.

B.C. 80.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig. Cicero, frag. de rege Alexandr. Appianus, Bell. Civ. i. 102.

(32) Though the Romans had already seized the smaller kingdom of Cyrene under the will of Ptolemy Apion, they could not agree among themselves upon the wholesale robbery of taking Egypt under the will which Alexander had made in their favour. They seized, however, a paltry sum of money which he had left at Tyre as a place of safety; and it was a matter of debate for many years afterwards in Rome, whether they should not

Cicero, Ii. contr. Rullum.

claim the kingdom of Egypt. But the nobles of Rome, who sold their patronage to kings for sums equal to the revenues of provinces, would have lost much by handing the kingdom over to the senate. Hence the Egyptian monarchy was left standing for two reigns longer.

(33) On the death of Ptolemy Alexander, the Alexandrians might easily have changed their weak and wicked rulers, and formed a government for themselves, if they had known how. But society, even when already formed, is only held together by everybody believing that his neighbour will act fairly and justly; while more than usual self-denial, love of right, and trust in one another are needed to form these bonds anew; and the whole of the scattered hints, which are all that is left to us of this history, show that those whose place in the state had formed them to think, and to be the leaders of their fellow-citizens, wanted every virtue fitting for the task.

B.C. 80.

(34) The legitimate male line of the Ptolemies came to an end on the death of the young Alexander II. The two natural sons of Soter II. were then the next in succession; and, as there was no other claimant, the crown fell to the elder. He was young, perhaps even a minor under the age of fourteen. His claims had been wholly overlooked at the death of his father; for though by the Egyptian law every son was held to be equally legitimate, it was not so by the Macedonian law. He took the name of NEUS DIONYSUS, or the young Osiris, as we find it written in the hieroglyphics, though he is usually called AULETES, *the piper;* a name afterwards given him because he was more proud of his skill in playing on the flute than of his very slender knowledge of the art of governing (see Fig. 13).

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Egypt. Inscript. pl. 4.

Fig. 13.

(35) It was in this reign that the historian Diodorus Siculus travelled in Egypt, and wrote his account of the manners and religion of the people. What he tells us of the early Egyptian

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 44.

history is of little value, when compared with the history by Manetho, who was a native of the country and could read the hieroglyphical records, or even with that by Herodotus; but nevertheless he deserves great praise, and our warmest thanks, for being nearly the first Greek writer, when Egyptian learning could no longer be thought valuable, when the religion, though looked down upon, might at any rate be studied with ease—for being nearly the first writer who thought the manners of this ancient people, after they had almost passed off the page of history, worth the notice of a philosopher.

(36) Diodorus, like Herodotus, was not referred by the priests to any written documents. He never quotes Manetho, but follows Herodotus in making one great hero for the chief actions of antiquity, whom he calls Sesoosis or Sesonchosis. To him he assigns every great work of which the author was unknown, the canals in the Delta, the statue of Amunothph III., the obelisks of Rameses II., the distant navigation under Necho, the mounds and trenches dug against Assyrian and Persian invasion, and even the great ship of Ptolemy Philopator; and, not knowing that southern Arabia and even Ethiopia had by the Alexandrians been sometimes called India, he says that this hero conquered even India beyond the Ganges. On the other hand, the fabulous conquest of the great serpent, the enemy of the human race, which we see sculptured on the sarcophagus of Oimenepthah, he describes as an historic fact of the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus. He tells us how this huge beast, forty-five feet long, was beaten down by troops of archers, slingers, and cavalry, and brought alive in a net to Alexandria, where Eve's old enemy was shown in a cage for the amusement of the curious citizens.

Apud. Justin. Martyr.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 53, 57.

Diod. Sic. lib. iii. 37.

Egypt. Inscript. pl. 62, 63.

(37) Memphis was then a great city; in its crowded streets, its palaces and temples, it was second only to Alexandria. A little to the west stood the pyramids, which were thought one of the seven wonders of the world. Their broad bases, sloping sides, and solid masonry had withstood the weather for ages; and their huge unwieldy stones were a less easy quarry for after builders than the live rock when nearer to the river's side. The priests of Memphis knew

the names of the kings who, one after the other, had built a new portico to their great temple of Pthah; but as to the when, the why, or by whom the pyramids were built, they had as little to guide their guesses as we have. The temple of Pthah, and every other building of Memphis, is now gone, and within a few miles of the spot stands the great city of Caïro, whose mosques and minarets have been quarried out of its ruins. But the pyramids still stand unbroken and unchanged, and we still amuse ourselves with guessing by whom, and when, and why they were built. One part of their task they have well fulfilled; they have outlived any portion of time that their builders could have dreamed of. But in another they seem to have failed; their worn surface no longer declares to us their builders' names and history. Their sloping sides, formed to withstand attacks, have not saved the inscriptions which they once held; and the builders, in thus overlooking the reed which was growing in their marshes, the papyrus, to which the great minds of Greece afterwards trusted their undying names, have only taught us how much safer it would have been, in their wish to be thought of and talked of in after ages, to have leaned upon the poet and historian.

(38) The temple at Ombos, which was begun by Philometor, was now finished by Auletes, having been not more than eighty years in raising, a time much shorter than had been spent upon many of the older temples. On the doorposts was his figure sculptured making his offerings to the old gods of the country. The beautiful temples of Dendera and Latopolis, which were built by the untiring industry of an equal number of years, and finished under the Roman emperors, were begun about this reign. Though some of the temples of Lower Egypt had fallen into decay, and though the throne was then tottering to its fall, the priests in Upper Egypt were still building for immortality. The religion of the Copts was still flourishing.

(39) The Egyptian's opinion of the creation was the growth of his own river's bank. The thoughtful man, who saw the Nile every year lay a body of solid manure upon his field, was able to measure against the walls of the old temples that the ground was slowly but certainly rising. An increase of the earth was being brought about by the

river. Hence he readily believed that the world itself had of old been formed out of water, and by means of water. The philosophers were nearly of the same opinion. They held that matter was itself eternal, like the other gods, and that our world, in the beginning, before it took any shape upon itself, was like thin mud, or a mass of water containing all things that were afterwards to be brought forth out of it. When the water had by its divine will separated itself from the earth, then the great Ra, the sun, sent down his quickening heat, and plants and animals came forth out of the wet land, as the insects are spawned out of the fields, before the eyes of the husbandman, every autumn after the Nile's overflow has retreated. The crafty priests of the Nile, who had lived in confinement as monks, declared that they had themselves visited and dwelt in the caverns beneath the river, where these treasures, while yet unshaped, were kept in store and waiting to come into being. And on the days sacred to the Nile, boys, the children of priestly families, were every year dedicated to the blue river-god that they might spend their youth in monastic retirement, and, as it was said, in these caverns beneath his waves. That these were very early Egyptian opinions we learn from our finding traces of them in the oldest of the Hebrew Scriptures, though the writers there are not so far warped by them as to rob the Creator of the praise for His own works. The author of the book of Genesis tells us that the Almighty formed our earth and its inhabitants by dividing the land from the water, and then commanding them both to bring forth living creatures; and again one of the Psalmists says that his substance, while yet imperfect, was by the Creator curiously wrought in the lowest depths of the earth. The Hebrew writer, however, is never misled, so as to think that any part of the creation was its own creator. But in the Egyptian philosophy sunshine and the River Nile are themselves the divine agents; and hence fire and water received divine honours, as the two purest of the elements; and every day when the temple of Serapis in Alexandria was opened, the singer standing on the steps of the portico sprinkled

2 Peter, ch. iii. 5.

Diogenes Laertius, Proëm.

Ovid. Metam. lib. i. 415.

Servius, in Georgic. lib. iv. 363.

Psalm cxxxix.

Chæremon, ap. Eusebium, Præp. Evang. lib. iii. 4.

water over the marble floor while he held forth the fire to the people (see Fig 14); and though he and most of his bearers were Greeks, he called upon the god in the Egyptian language.

(40) The inner walls of the temples glittered with gold and silver and amber, and sparkled with gems from Ethiopia and India; and the recesses were veiled with rich curtains. The costliness was often in striking contrast with the chief inmate, much to the surprise of the Greek traveller, who having leave to examine a temple, had entered the sacred rooms, and asked to be shown the image of the god for whose sake it was built. One of the priests in waiting then approached with a solemn look, chanting a hymn, and pulling aside the veil, allowed him to peep in at a snake, a crocodile, or a cat, or some other beast, fitter to inhabit a bog or cavern than to lie on a purple cushion in a stately palace. The funerals of the sacred animals were celebrated with great pomp, particularly that of the bull Apis; and at a cost, in one case, of one hundred talents, or seventeen thousand pounds; which was double what Ptolemy Soter, in his wish to please his new subjects, spent upon the Apis of his day. After the funeral the priests looked for a calf with the right spots, and when they had found one they fattened it for forty days, and brought it to Memphis in a boat under a golden awning, and lodged it safely in the temple. The religious feelings of the Egyptians were much warmer and stronger than those of the Greeks or Romans; they have often been accused of eating one another, but never of eating a sacred animal. Once a year the people of Memphis celebrated the birthday of Apis with great pomp and expense, and one of the chief ceremonies on the occasion was the throwing a golden dish into the Nile. During the week that these rejoicings lasted,

Clemens, Pædag. iii. 2.

Fig. 14.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 84.

C. Julius, Solinus.

while the sacred river was appeased by gifts, the crocodile was thought to lose its fierceness, its teeth were harmless, and it never attempted to bite; and it was not till six o'clock on the eighth day that this animal again became an object of fear to those whose occu- Pliny, lib. viii. 71.

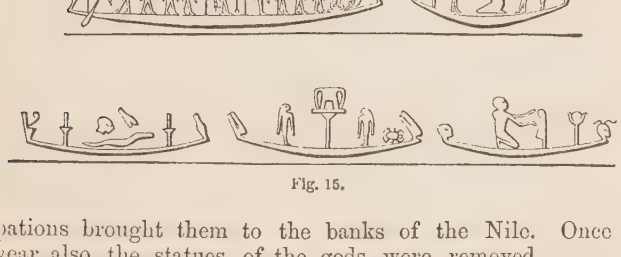


Fig. 15.

pations brought them to the banks of the Nile. Once a year also the statues of the gods were removed from their pedestals and placed in barges, and thus carried in solemn procession along the Nile, and only brought back to the temples after some days (see Fig. 15). It was supposed that the gods were passing these days on a visit to the righteous Ethiopians, and it seems probable that they were the twelve days at Christmas which we still keep as holidays. Diod. Sic. lib. i. 97. Iliad. i. 424.

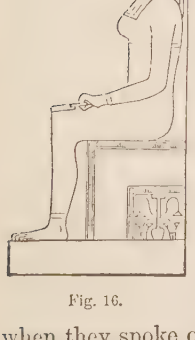


Fig. 16.

(41) The cat was at all times one of the animals held most sacred by the Egyptians. In the earliest and latest times we find the statues of their goddesses with cats' heads (see Fig. 16). The cats of Alexandria were looked upon as so many images of Neith or the Minerva of Sais, a goddess worshipped both by Greeks and Egyptians; and it passed into a proverb with the Greeks, when they spoke of any two things being unlike, to say that they were as much like one another as a cat was to Minerva. It is to Alexandria also that we trace the story British Museum. Plutarch. Proverbia Alexandr.

of a cat turned into a lady to please a prince who had fallen in love with it. The lady, however, when dressed in her bridal robes, could not help scampering about the room after a mouse seen upon the floor; and when Plutarch was in Egypt it had already become a proverb, that any one in too much finery was as awkward as a cat in a crocus-coloured robe.

(42) So deeply rooted in the minds of the Egyptians was the worship of these animals, that when a Roman soldier had killed a cat unawares, though the Romans were masters of the country, the people rose against him in a fury. In vain the king sent a message to quiet the mob, to let them know that the cat was killed by accident; and, though the fear of Rome would most likely have saved a Roman soldier unharmed whatever other crime he might have been guilty of, in this case nothing would quiet the people but his death, and he was killed before the eyes of Diodorus the historian. One nation rises above another not so much from its greater strength or skill in arms as from its higher aim and stronger wish for power. The Egyptians, we see, had not lost their courage, and when the occasion called them out they showed a fearlessness not unworthy of their Theban forefathers; on seeing a dead cat in the streets they rose against the king's orders and the power of Rome; had they thought their own freedom or their country's greatness as much worth fighting for, they could perhaps have gained them. But the Egyptians had no civil laws or rights that they cared about, they had nothing left that they valued but their religion, and this the Romans took good care not to meddle with. Had the Romans made war upon the priests and temples, as the Persians had done, they would perhaps in the same way have been driven out of Egypt; but they never shocked the religious feelings of the people, and even after Egypt had become a Roman province, when the beautiful temples of Esne, Dendera, and other cities, were dedicated in the names of the Roman emperors, they seldom copied the example of Philometor, and put Greek, much less Roman writing on the portico, but continued to let the walls be covered with hieroglyphical inscriptions.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 83.

(43) The Egyptians, when rich enough to pay for it, still had the bodies of their friends embalmed at their death, and

made into mummies; though the priests, to save part of the cost, often put the mummy of a man just dead into a mummy-case which had been made and used in the reign of a Thothmosis or an Amunothph. They thought that every man, at his death, took upon himself the character of Osiris, that the nurses who laid out the dead body represented the goddesses Isis and Nephthys, while the man who made the mummy was supposed to be the god Anubis (see Fig. 17). When the embalming was finished, it was part of the funeral to bring the dead man to trial for what he had done when living, and thus to determine whether he was entitled to an honourable burial. The mummy was ferried across the lake belonging to the temple, and taken before the judge Osiris. A pair of scales was brought forth by the dog-headed Anubis, and the hawk-headed Horus; and with this they weighed the past life of the deceased. The judge, with the advice of a jury of forty-two, then pronounced the solemn verdict, which was written down by the ibis-headed Thoth. But human nature is the same in all ages and in all countries, and, whatever might have been the past life of the dead, the judge, not to hurt the feelings of the friends, always declared that he was "a righteous and a good man;" and, notwithstanding the show of truth in the trial, it passed into a proverb to say of a wicked man, that he was too bad to be praised, even at his funeral. Various were the opinions among the priests about a good man's employments after death. Some

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 92.

Archæologia, xxvii. 262.

Denon, pl. 141.

Plutarch. Prov. Alex.

Fig. 17.

painted him on the papyrus which was buried with him, as ploughing with oxen in a meadow well watered with canals, and that needed no pumping. Others made him lie in idle case by the side of his water-tank, enjoying the wished-for coolness, and freedom from thirst. Others, again, of a more haughty nature, buried him with the prayer that he might be able to get the better of his enemies, when he met them in the next world, or showed him sitting in pride with those unhappy men, who might have before offended him, now in bonds beneath his chair; or they painted, on the mummy-case, the same enemies, with their arms tied behind them, under the soles of his feet to be trampled on (see Fig. 18). The custom of embalming was thought right by

Inscript. Boeckh, 4710.

Fig. 18.

all; but from examining the mummies that have come down to us, it would seem to have been very much confined to the priestly families, and seldom used in the case of children. The mummies, however, were highly valued by the survivors of the family, and when from poverty any man was driven to borrow money, the

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 93.

mummies were thought good security by the lender, and taken as such for the loan. The mummy-cases, indeed, could be sold for a large sum, as when made of wood they were covered with painting, and sometimes in part gilt, and often three in number, one inclosing the other (see Fig. 19).

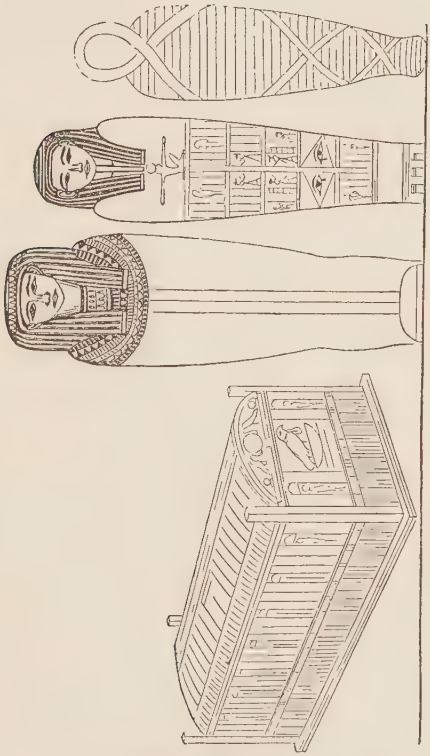


Fig. 19.—A mummy with its three cases.

The stone mummy-cases were yet more valuable, as they were either of white alabaster, or hard black basalt, beautifully polished, in either case carved with hieroglyphics, and shaped to the body, like the inner wooden cases.

(44) With the body was very often buried a roll of papyrus,

containing a copy, more or less complete, of the Book of the Dead; and chapters, out of the same book, were also written on the mummy-case. In its longest-known form, this book contains one hundred and sixty-five chapters, written under a long line of pictures, describing what will befall the dead man hereafter. It begins with the funeral procession, and the passage across the river to the tomb (chapter 1—16). He then enters the region of Amenti; the golden twig, spoken of by Virgil, is presented to him (17), and he goes forward and worships eighteen groups of gods (18—30). He fights and overcomes the crocodiles, serpents, and other wild beasts that he meets with in the Valley of the Shadow of Death (31—41). He arrives in another region, enlightened by the sun, in which grows the tree of life (42—64), and meets with a variety of gods, some in the form of animals (65—88). There the soul returns to his body (89), and he again goes forward by land and by water, meeting with other gods (90—109), till he arrives at his farm—a plot of ground well watered by canals. There he rows about in his boat, he ploughs the ground, he sows the seed, he reaps the corn, threshes it by his trampling oxen, and thanks the Nile-god for the plenteous overflow (110). There he awaits the day of judgment. On leaving his farm, he meets with other gods, and visits several temples (111—124), and is then brought to the judgment-seat. The judge, Osiris, is seated under a canopy, perhaps a gnat-gauze; the deceased is introduced by the goddess of truth; Typhon, in the form of a hippopotamus, accuses him; the four lesser gods intercede for him; his heart is weighed in the scales against the figure of truth, by Horus and Anubis; the forty-two assessors declare him innocent of the forty-two great sins; and the god Thoth writes down the verdict (125). He then sees the bottomless pit, out of which rise flames of fire (126); and after meeting other gods, and crossing over the river in company with numerous gods in other boats (127—140), he meets with the Cabeiri, or gods of punishment; some seated in their underground caves, and all armed with swords (144—146). And lastly he arrives in safety at the temple of the bull Apis, in Lower Egypt (148).

(45) Though the old laws of Egypt must very much have fallen into disuse during the reigns of the latter Ptolemies,

they had, at least, been left unchanged; and they teach us that the shadow of freedom may be seen, as in Rome under the Cæsars, and in Florence under the Medici, long after the substance has been lost. In quarrels between man and man, the thirty judges, from the cities of Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis, were still guided by the eight books of the law. The king, the priests, and the soldiers, were the only landholders of the country, while the herdsmen, husbandmen, and handicraftsmen, were thought of lower caste. Though the armies of Egypt were for the most part filled with Greek mercenaries, and the landholders of the order of soldiers could then have had as little to do with arms as knights and esquires have in our days, yet they still boasted of the wisdom of their laws, by which arms were only to be trusted to men who had a stake in the country worth fighting for. The old purity of manners, without which the nation could never have risen to its former greatness, had long since passed away. The priests alone obeyed the old marriage law, that a man should have only one wife. Other men, when rich enough, for the most part, degraded themselves and the women by marrying several. All children were held equally legitimate, whatever woman was the mother. With such a taint upon a nation, nothing could save it from decay.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 73, 75.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 80.

(46) It is to these latter reigns of the Ptolemies, when high feeling was sadly wanting in all classes of society, when literature and art were alike in a very low state, that we may place the rise of caricature in Egypt. We find drawings made on papyrus to scoff at what the nation used to hold sacred. The sculptures on the walls of the temples are copied in little; and cats, dogs, and monkeys are there placed in the attitudes of the gods and kings of old. In one picture, we have the mice attacking a castle, defended by the cats, copied from a battle scene of Rameses II. fighting against the Ethiopians. In another, the king on his throne as a dog, with a second dog behind him as a fan-bearer, is receiving the sacred offerings from a cat. In a third, the king and queen are playing at chess or draughts in the form of a lion playing with a unicorn or horned ass (see Fig. 20).

British Museum.

(47) We may form some opinion of the wealth of Egypt in

its more prosperous times, when we learn from Cicero that in this reign, when the Romans had good means of knowing, the revenues of the country amounted to twelve thousand five hundred talents, or two

Ap. Strabon. lib. xvii.

Fig. 20.—Sculpture, and its caricature on papyrus.

millions sterling; just one-half of which was paid by the port of Alexandria. This was at a time when the foreign trade, through the faults of the government, had sunk down to its lowest ebb; when not more than twenty ships sailed each year from the Red Sea

Diod. Sic. lib. xvii. 52.

to India; when the free population of the kingdom had so far fallen off, that it was not more than three millions, which was only half of what it had been in the reign of Ptolemy Soter, though Alexandria alone still held three hundred thousand persons. Diod. Sic. lib. i. 31; lib. xvii. 52.

(48) But, though much of the trade of the country was lost, though many of the royal works had ceased, though the manufacture of the finer linen had left the country, the digging in the gold mines, the favourite source of wealth to a despot, never ceased. Night and day in the mines, near the Golden Berenice, did slaves, criminals, and prisoners of war, work without pause, chained together in gangs, and guarded by soldiers, who were carefully chosen for their not being able to speak the language of these unhappy workmen. The rock which held the gold was broken up into small pieces; when hard it was first made brittle in the fire; the broken stone was then washed to separate the waste from the heavier grains which held the gold; and, lastly, the valuable parts, when separated, were kept heated in a furnace for five days, at the end of which time the pure gold was found melted into a button at the bottom. But the mines were nearly worn out; and the value of the gold was a very small part of the seven millions sterling which they are said to have yielded every year in the reign of Rameses II. Diod. Sic. lib. iii. 12.

(49) As Auletes felt himself hardly safe upon the throne, his first wish was to get himself acknowledged as king by the Roman senate. For this end, he sent to Rome a large sum of money to buy the votes of the senators; and he borrowed a further sum of Rabirius Posthumus, one of the richest farmers of the Roman taxes, which he spent on the same object. But though the Romans never tried to turn him out of his kingdom, he did not get the wished-for decree before he went to Rome, in the twenty-fourth year of his reign. But we know nothing of the first years of his reign. A nation must be in a very demoralised state when its history disproves the saying, that the people are happy while their annals are short. There was more virtue and happiness, and perhaps even less bloodshed, with the stir of mind while Ptolemy Soter was at war with Antigonus, Dion Cass. lib. xxxix. Cicero, pro Rabirio. Diod. Sic. lib. i. 44, 83.

than during this dull, unwarlike, and vicious time. The king gave himself up to his natural bent for pleasure and debauchery. At times when virtue is uncopied and unrewarded, it is usually praised and let alone; but in this reign, sobriety was a crime in the eyes of the king, a quiet behaviour was thought a reproach against his irregularities. Demetrius, the Platonic philosopher, was in danger of being put to death, because it was told to the king that he never drank wine, and had been seen at the feast of Bacchus in his usual dress, while every other man was in the dress of a woman. But the philosopher was allowed to disprove the charge of sobriety, or at least to make amends for his fault; and on the king sending for him the next day, he made himself drunk publicly in the sight of all the court, and danced with cymbals in a loose dress of Tarentine gauze. But so few are the deeds worth mentioning in the falling state, that we are pleased even to be told that, in the one hundred and seventy-eighth Olympiad, Straton of Alexandria conquered in the Olympic games, and was crowned in the same day for wrestling, and for *pancratium*, or wrestling and boxing joined.

Lucian. De Calumniâ.

Pausanias, lib. v. 21. B.C. 68.

(50) In the thirteenth year of this reign, when the war against the pirates called for the whole naval force of Rome, Pompey sent a fleet under Lentulus Marcellinus, to clear the coast and creeks of Egypt from these robbers. The Egyptian government was too weak to guard its own trade; and Lentulus in his consulship put the Ptolemaic eagle and thunderbolt on his coins, to show that he had exercised an act of sovereignty. Three years later, we again meet with the eagle and thunderbolt on the consular coins of Aurelius Cotta; and we learn from Cicero, that in that year it was found necessary to send a fleet to Alexandria, to enforce the orders of the senate.

Florus, lib. iii. 6. B.C. 68.

Eckhel, vol. v. 181. B.C. 65.

Eckhel, vol. v. 147.

Cicero, ii. contr. Rullum.

(51) We next find the Roman senate debating whether they should not seize the kingdom as their inheritance under the will of Ptolemy Alexander II., but, moved by the bribes of Auletes, and perhaps by other reasons which we are not told, they forbore to grasp the prize. In this difficulty Auletes was helped by the great Pompey, to

B.C. 64.

whom he had sent an embassy with a golden crown worth four thousand pieces of gold, which met him at Damascus on his Syrian campaign. He then formed a secret treaty with Mithridates, king of Pontus, who was engaged in warfare with the Romans, their common enemy. Auletes was now a widower with six young children, and Mithridates had two daughters; and accordingly it was agreed that one daughter should be married to Auletes, and the other to his brother, the king of Cyprus. But the ruin and death of Mithridates broke off the marriages; and Auletes was able to conceal from the Romans that he had ever formed an alliance with their enemy.

Josephus, Antiq. xiv. 3.

Appian. Bell. Mithr. cxi.

(52) In the year which was made famous by the consulship of Cicero, Jerusalem was taken by the Roman army under Pompey; and Judæa, which had enjoyed a short-lived freedom of less than one hundred years under the Maccabees, was then put under a Roman governor. The fortifications of the temple were destroyed. This was felt by the Jews of Lower Egypt as a heavy blow, and from this time their sufferings in that country began. While their brethren had been lords of Judæa they had held up their heads with the Greeks in Alexandria, but upon the fall of Jerusalem they sunk down to the rank of the Egyptians. They thought worse of themselves, and they were thought worse of by others. The Egyptian Jews were very closely allied to the people of the Delta. Though they had been again and again warned by their prophets not to mix with the Egyptians, they seem not to have listened to the warning. They were in many religious points less strict than their brethren in Judæa. The living in Egypt, the building a second temple, and the using a Greek bible, were all breaches, if not of the law, at least of the tradition. They surrounded their synagogues with sacred groves, which were clearly forbidden by Moses. Though they were not guilty of worshipping images, yet they did not think it wrong to have portraits and statues of themselves. In their dislike of pork, in their washings, and in other Eastern customs, they were like the Egyptians; and hence the Greeks, who thought them both barbarians, very grudgingly yielded to them the privileges of choosing their

Josephus, Antiq. xiv. 4. B.C. 63.

DOMINICAN

own magistrates, of having their own courts of justice, and the other rights of citizenship which the policy of the Ptolemies had granted. The Jews, on the other hand, in whose eyes religion was everything, saw the Greeks and Egyptians worshipping the same gods and the same sacred animals, and felt themselves as far above the Greeks in those branches of philosophy which arise out of religion, as they were below them in that rank which is gained by success in war. Hence it was with many heart-burnings, and not without struggles which shed blood in the streets of Alexandria, that they found themselves sinking to the level of the Egyptians, and losing one by one the rights of Macedonian citizenship.

(53) During these years Auletes had been losing his friends and weakening his government, and, at last, when he refused to quarrel with the senate about the island of Cyprus, the Egyptians rose against him in arms, and he was forced to fly from Alexandria. He took ship for Rome, and in his way there he met Cato, who was at Rhodes on his voyage to Cyprus. He sent to Cato to let him know that he was in the city, and that he wished to see him. But the Roman sent word back that he was unwell, and that if the king wanted to speak to him he must come himself. This was not a time for Auletes to quarrel with a senator, when he was on his way to Rome to beg for help against his subjects; so he was forced to go to Cato's lodgings, who did not even rise from his seat when the king entered the room. But this treatment was not quite new to Auletes; in his flight from Alexandria, in disguise and without a servant, he had had to eat brown bread in the cottage of a peasant; and he now learned how much more irksome it was to wait upon the pleasure of a Roman senator. Cato gave him the best advice; that, instead of going to Rome, where he would find that all the wealth of Egypt would be thought a bribe too small for the greediness of the senators whose votes he wanted, he would do better to return to Alexandria, and make peace with his rebellious subjects. Auletes, however, went on to Italy, and he arrived at Rome in the twenty-fourth year of his reign; and in the three

Dion Cassius, lib. xxxix. B.C. 58.

Plutarch. Vit. Caton.

Cicero, Tuscul. v. 34.

Plutarch. Vit. Caton.

Chronicon Alexandrinum.

years that he spent there in courting and bribing the senators he learned the truth of Cato's advice.

(54) His younger brother, Ptolemy, who was reigning in Cyprus, was not even so well treated. The Romans passed a law making that wealthy island a Roman province, no doubt upon the plea of the will of Alexander II. and the king's illegitimacy; and they sent Cato, rather against his wish, to turn Ptolemy out of his kingdom. Cyprus had been joined to Alexandria for two hundred and fifty years, ever since it was conquered by the first Ptolemy. Before that time it had belonged, first to Tyre, as the chief of the Phenician powers, and then, on the fall of the Phenicians, to Nineveh, to Babylon, to Egypt, and to Persia, as each of those great monarchies had the Phenician sailors for their subjects. The language of the island remained Phenician. But Ptolemy Soter governed it by means of Greeks; and so many were the Greeks who settled there, that the language of the towns was very much changed. The Greek sailors took the place of the Phenicians, and whatever of learning, and literature, and art were there, were borrowed from Alexandria. It was at this time the last of the foreign possessions that remained to the family of the Ptolemies. When the Romans claimed it the younger Ptolemy gave up the island to them without Cato being called upon to use force, and in return the Romans made him high priest in the temple of the Paphian Venus; but he soon put himself to death by poison. Canidius Crassus, who had been employed by Cato in this affair, may have had some fighting at sea with the Egyptians, as on one of his coins we see on one side a crocodile, and on the other the prow of a ship, as if he had beaten the Egyptian fleet in the mouth of the Nile.

Livy, Epit. civ. B.C. 57.

Plutarch. Vit. Caton.

Fig. 21.

Eckhel, vol. v. 161.

(55) On the flight of their king, the rebellious Alexandrians set on the throne the two eldest of his daughters, CLEOPATRA TRYPHÆNA (see Fig. 21) and BERENICE, and sent an embassy, at the head of which was Dion, the academic philosopher, to plead their cause at Rome against the king. But the gold of Auletes had already gained the senate; and Cicero

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig. B.C. 57.

spoke, on his behalf, one of his great speeches, now unfortunately lost, in which he rebutted the charge that Auletes was at all to be blamed for the death of Alexander, whom he thought justly killed by his guards for the murder of his queen and kinswoman. Cæsar, whose year of consulship was then drawing to an end, took his part warmly; and Auletes became in debt to him in the sum of seventeen million drachmæ, or nearly half a million sterling, either for money lent to bribe the senators, or for bonds then given to Cæsar instead of money. By these means Auletes got his title acknowledged; the door of the senate was shut against the Alexandrian ambassadors; and the philosopher Dion, the head of the embassy, was poisoned in Rome by the slaves of his friend Lucceius, in whose house he was dwelling. But, nevertheless, Auletes was not able to get an army sent to help him against his rebellious subjects and his daughters; nor was Cæsar able to get from the senate, for the employment of his proconsular year, the task of replacing Auletes on the throne.

Cicero, frag. de rege Alexandr.

Suetonius, Cæsar, xi.

Plutarch. Vit. J. Cæsar.

Cicero, pro. Cœlio.

(56) This high employment was then sought for both by Lentulus and by Pompey. The senate at first leaned in favour of the former; and he would perhaps have gained it, if the Roman creditors of Auletes, who were already trembling for their money, had not bribed openly in favour of Pompey, as the more powerful of the two. On Pompey therefore the choice of the senate at last fell. Pompey then took Auletes into his house, as his friend and guest, and would have got orders to lead him back into his kingdom at the head of a Roman army, had not the tribunes of the people, fearing any addition to Pompey's great power, had recourse to their usual state-engine, the Sibylline books; and the pontifex, at their bidding, publicly declared that it was written in those sacred pages that the king of Egypt should have the friendship of Rome, but should not be helped with an army.

Cicero, Epist. ad Q. Fratrem, ii. 2.

Dion Cassius, lib. xxxix.

(57) But though Lentulus and Pompey were each strong enough to stop the other from having this high command, Auletes was not without hopes that some Roman general would be led, by the promise of money, and by the honour, to undertake his cause, though it would be against the laws

of Rome to do so without orders from the senate. Cicero then took him under his protection, and carried him in a litter of state to his villa at Baiæ, and wrote to Lentulus, the proconsul of Cilicia and Cyprus, strongly urging him to snatch the glory of replacing Auletes on the throne, and of being the patron of the king of Egypt. But Lentulus seems not to have chosen to run the risk of so far breaking the laws of his country.

Cicero, Epist. ad Q. Fratrem, ii. 9.

Epist. i. 7.

(58) Auletes then went, with pressing letters from Pompey, to Gabinius, the proconsul of Syria, and offered him the large bribe of ten thousand talents, or fifteen hundred thousand pounds, if he would lead the Roman army into Egypt, and replace him on the throne. Most of the officers were against this undertaking; but the letters of Pompey, the advice of Mark Antony, the master of the horse, and perhaps the greatness of the bribe, outweighed those cautious opinions.

Dion Cass. lib. xxxix.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

(59) While Auletes had been thus pleading his cause at Rome and with the army, Cleopatra Tryphæna, the elder of the two queens, had died; and, as no one of the other children of Auletes was old enough to be joined with Berenice on the throne, the Alexandrians sent to Syria for Seleucus, the son of Antiochus Grypus and of Selene, the sister of Lathyrus, to come to Egypt and marry Berenice. He was low-minded in all his pleasures and tastes, and got the nickname of Cybiosactes, *the scullion*. He was even said to have stolen the golden sarcophagus in which the body of Alexander was buried; and was so much disliked by his young wife that she had him strangled on the fifth day after their marriage. Berenice then married Archelaus, a son of Mithridates Eupator, king of Pontus; and she had reigned one year with her sister and two years with her husbands, when the Roman army brought back her father, Ptolemy Auletes, into Egypt.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

B.C. 54.

(60) Gabinius, on marching, gave out as an excuse for quitting the province entrusted to him by the senate, that it was in self-defence; and that Syria was in danger from the Egyptian fleet commanded by Archelaus. He was accompanied by a Jewish army under the command of Antipator, sent by Hyrcanus, whom the Romans had just made governor of Judæa.

Cicero, pro Rabirio.

5 Maccabees, xl. 18.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

Mark Antony was sent forward with the horse, and he routed the Egyptian army near Pelusium, and then entered the city with Auletes. The king, in the cruelty of his revenge, wished to put the citizens to the sword, and was only stopped by Antony's forbidding it. The Egyptian army was at this time in the lowest state of discipline; it was the only place where the sovereign was not despotic. The soldiers, who prized the lawlessness of their trade even more than its pay, were a cause of fear only to their fellow-citizens. When Archelaus led them out against the Romans, and ordered them to throw up a trench around their camp, they refused to obey; they said that ditch-making was not work for soldiers, but that it ought to be done at the cost of the state. Hence, when on this first success Gabinius followed with the body of the army, he easily conquered the rest of the country, and put to death Berenice and Archelaus. He then led back the army into his province of Syria, but left behind him a body of troops under Lucius Septimius to guard the throne of Auletes, and to check the risings of the Alexandrians.

Valerius Max. ix. 1.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Dion Cassius, lib. xxxix.

Lib. xlii.

(61) Gabinius had refused to undertake this affair, which was the more dangerous because against the laws of Rome, unless the large bribe were first paid down in money. He would take no promises; and Auletes, who in his banishment had no money at his command, had to borrow it of some one who would listen to his large promises of after payment. He found this person in Rabirius Posthumus, who had before lent him money, and who saw that it would be all lost unless Auletes regained the throne. Rabirius, therefore, lent him all he was worth, and borrowed the rest from his friends; and as soon as Auletes was on the throne, he went to Alexandria to claim his money and his reward. While Auletes still stood in need of Roman help, and saw the advantage of keeping faith with his foreign creditors, Rabirius was allowed to hold the office of royal *diœcetes*, or paymaster-general, which was one of great state and profit, and one by which he could in time have repaid himself his loan. He wore a royal robe; the taxes of Alexandria went through his hands; he was indeed master of the city. But when the king felt safe on his throne, he sent away his troublesome creditor, who returned to Rome

Cicero, pro Rabirio.

with the loss of his money, to stand his trial as a state criminal for having lent it. Rabirius had been for a time mortgagee in possession of the revenues of Egypt; and Auletes had felt more indebted for his crown to a Roman citizen than to the senate. But in the dealings of Rome with foreign kings, which were not unlike those of our East India Company with the Indian nabobs, these evils had often before arisen, and at last been made criminal; and while Gabinius was tried for treason, *de majestate*, for leading his army out of his province, Rabirius was tried, under the *Lex Julia de pecuniis repetundis*, for lending money and taking office under Auletes.

Cicero, ad Fratrem, iii. 1.

Pro Rabirio.

(62) One of the last acts of Gabinius in Syria was to change the form of the Jewish government into an aristocracy, leaving Hyrcanus as the high priest. The Jews thereon began to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, that had been thrown down by Pompey, four hundred and eighty-three years, or after sixty-nine weeks of seven years each, since Cyrus had given them permission to return home from captivity, agreeably to the time mentioned in the book of Daniel.

Josephus, Wars 1. viii. 5.

Wars 1. viii. 2.

Ch. ix. 25.

(63) Among the prisoners sent to Rome by Gabinius was Timagenes, the son of the king's banker, who probably lost his liberty as a hostage on Ptolemy's failure to repay the loan. But he was afterwards ransomed from slavery by a son of Sylla; and he remained at Rome teaching Greek eloquence in the schools, and writing his numerous works. Horace speaks of him as the model of a polite writer and declaimer.

Suidas.

Epist. 1, 19, 15.

(64) The climate of Egypt is hardly suited to Europeans, and perhaps at no time did the births in the Greek families equal the deaths. That part of the population was kept up by new comers; and latterly the Romans had been coming over to share in the plunder that was there scattered among the ruling class. For some time past Alexandria had been a favourite place of settlement for such Romans as either through their fault or their misfortune were forced to leave their homes. All who were banished for their crimes or who went away to escape from trial, all runaway slaves, all ruined debtors, found a place of safety in Alexandria; and by enrolling themselves in the Egyptian army they joined in bonds of fellowship with thousands like

J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii.

themselves, who made it a point of honour to screen one another from being overtaken by justice or reclaimed by their masters. With such men as these, together with some bands of robbers from Syria and Cilicia, had the ranks of the Egyptian army latterly been recruited. These were now joined by a number of soldiers and officers from the army of Gabinius, who liked the Egyptian high pay and lawlessness better than the strict discipline of the Romans. As, in this mixed body of men, the more regular courage and greater skill in war was found among the Romans, they were chiefly chosen as officers, and the whole had something of the form of a Roman army. These soldiers in Alexandria were above all law and discipline.

(65) The laws were everywhere badly enforced, crimes passed unpunished, and property became unsafe. Robberies were carried on openly, and the only hope of recovering what was stolen was by buying it back from the thief. In many cases whole villages lived upon plunder, and for that purpose formed themselves into a society, and put themselves under the orders of a chief; and, when any merchant or husbandman was robbed, he applied to this chief, who usually restored to him the stolen property on payment of one fourth of its value.

Diod. Sic. lib. i. 80.

(66) As the country fell off in wealth, power, and population, the schools of Alexandria fell off in learning, and we meet with few authors whose names can brighten the pages of this reign. Apollonius of Citium, indeed, who had studied surgery and anatomy at Alexandria under Zopyrus, when he returned to Cyprus, wrote a treatise on the joints of the body, and dedicated his work to Ptolemy, king of that island. The work is still remaining in manuscript, though unpublished.

Ant. Cocchius, Chirurg. Græc.

(67) Beside his name of Neus Dionysus, the king is in the hieroglyphics sometimes called Philopator and Philadelphus; and in a Greek inscription on a statue at Philæ he is called by the three names, Neus Dionysus, Philopator, Philadelphus. The coins which are usually thought to be his are in a worse style of art than those of the kings before him. He died in the twenty-ninth year of his reign, leaving four children; namely, Cleopatra, Arsinoë, and two Ptolemies.

Hieregl. pl. 65. Inscript. Letronne, Recherches, 134.

Visconti, Icon. Grec.

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

Fig. 22.—Queen Cleopatra.

CHAPTER XII.

CLEOPATRA, AND HER BROTHERS; JULIUS CÆSAR, AND MARK ANTONY. B.C. 51-30.

(1) Ptolemy Neus Dionysus had by his will left his kingdom to Cleopatra and Ptolemy, his elder daughter and elder son, who, agreeably to the custom of the country, were to marry one another and reign with equal power. He had sent one copy of his will to Rome, to be lodged in the public treasury, and in it he called upon the Roman people, by all the gods and by the treaties by which they were bound, to see that it was obeyed. He had also begged them to undertake the guardianship of his son. The senate voted Pompey tutor to the young king, or governor of Egypt; and the Alexandrians in the third year of this reign sent sixty ships of war to help the great Pompey in his struggle against Julius Cæsar for the chief power in Rome. But Pompey's power was by that time drawing to an end, and the votes of the senate could give no strength to the weak; hence the eunuch Pothinus, who had the care of the elder Ptolemy, was governor of Egypt, and his first act was to declare his

J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii. B.C. 51.

Eutropius, lib. vi. 21.

Appianus, Bell. Civ. ii.

J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii.

young pupil king, and to set at nought the will of Auletes, by which Cleopatra was joined with him on the throne.

(2) Cleopatra fled into Syria, and, with a manly spirit which showed what she was afterwards to be, raised an army and marched back to the borders of Egypt, to claim her rights by force of arms. It was in the fourth year of her reign, when the Egyptian troops were moved to Pelusium to meet her, and the two armies were within a few leagues of one another, that Pompey, who had been the friend of Auletes when the king wanted a friend, landed on the shores of Egypt in distress, and almost alone. His army had just been beaten at Pharsalia, and he was flying from Cæsar, and he hoped to receive from the son the kindness which he had shown to the father. But gratitude is a virtue little known in palaces, and Ptolemy had been cradled in princely selfishness. In this civil war between Pompey and Cæsar, the Alexandrians would have been glad to be the friends of both, but that was now out of the question; Pompey's coming made it necessary for them to choose which they should join, and Ptolemy's council, like cowards, only wished to side with the strong. Pothinus the eunuch, Achillas the general, who was an Egyptian, and Theodotus of Chios, who was the prince's tutor in rhetoric, were the men by whom the fate of this great Roman was decided. "By putting him to death," said Theodotus, "you will oblige Cæsar, and have nothing to fear from Pompey;" and he added with a smile, "Dead men do not bite." So Achillas and Lucius Septimius, the head of the Roman troops in the Egyptian army, were sent down to the seaside to welcome him, to receive him as a friend, and to murder him. They handed him out of his galley into their boat, and put him to death on his landing. They then cut off from his lifeless trunk the head which had been three times crowned with laurels in the capitol; and in that disfigured state the young Ptolemy saw for the first time, and without regret, the face of his father's best friend.

B.C. 48.

J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii.

Plutarch. Vit. Pomp.

(3) Shortly after this, Cæsar landed at Alexandria in pursuit of Pompey, and there learned that Ptolemy had saved him from the crime of murdering his wife's father. He had brought with him only the small force of three thousand two

hundred foot and eight hundred horse, trusting that the news of his victory at Pharsalia would make a larger force unnecessary, and that he should be joined by Lucius Septimius and the Roman cohorts in Egypt. In this he was not disappointed. He found the citizens in a state of disorder, which was not a little increased by his entering the city as a master, with the lictors marching before him, carrying the fasces as the mark of his rank. It was not till after some days that the city was quieted; and he would even have withdrawn for safety if the winds had not made it difficult to quit the harbour. He sent, however, a message for the legions which he had left in Asia to come to him as soon as they could.

(4) In the meanwhile he claimed the right, as Roman consul, of settling the dispute between Cleopatra and her brother, and though he had only a few thousand men himself, he ordered them both to disband their armies. Ptolemy, who was at Alexandria, seemed willing to obey; but Pothinus his guardian would not agree to it, and secretly sent orders to Achillas, the general at Pelusium, to bring the army to Alexandria, that they might be able to give orders rather than to receive them from Cæsar and his small force. On the other hand, Ptolemy, at the command of Cæsar, sent Dioscorides and Serapion, to order Achillas to remain at Pelusium; but these messengers were not even allowed to return, one was killed and the other badly wounded, and Achillas marched towards Alexandria at the head of twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse.

(5) Cæsar, during the short time that he had been in Alexandria, had made many enemies by claiming from the people the large debt which was due to him from Auletes the late king. Pothinus, who as treasurer collected the tribute and paid it to him, carefully made the demands appear as harassing as he could. He caused only wooden and earthen vessels to be served up at the king's table, on the pretence that Cæsar had taken all the gold and silver for his debt. He supplied Cæsar's soldiers with musty corn, and when they complained, said they ought to be satisfied with it, as they lived at other people's cost. Plutarch. Vit. J. Cæs.

(6) Cleopatra was at this time with her army beyond

Pelusium; but believing her charms would have more weight with Cæsar, while he was judging between herself and her brother, than anything that she could say by letter, she sailed privately for Alexandria. She entered the harbour in a small boat, with one friend, Apollodorus the Sicilian, in the dusk of the evening, and made for the palace. As she saw it would be difficult to enter undiscovered, she rolled herself in a carpet; and Apollodorus tied her up at full length like a bale of goods, and carried her in at the gates to Cæsar. She was not mistaken in the strength that her cause would gain from her youth and beauty. Though Cæsar had before ordered her to obey her father's will, and reign jointly with her brother, she now found herself mistress of his heart, and of the Roman legions.

(7) About this time Achillas entered Alexandria at the head of his large army. Cæsar had no party in the city, and only his own little body of troops to trust to. He took with him the two young Ptolemies, their sister Arsinoë, and the minister Pothinus, as hostages for his own safety, and shut himself up in the quarter of the city called the Bruchium, with the harbour on one side and the palace as a chief fortress. The strong walls of the palace easily withstood the attacks of Achillas; and Cæsar's brave and well-trained little band drove back the larger forces which crowded one another in the narrow streets. The greatest struggle was near the harbour, and if Cæsar had lost his galleys he would have been beaten. But the Romans fought in despair, and he was able to burn all the galleys which he could not guard, as well as those in the docks; and by these means he kept the harbour. But unfortunately the fire did not stop at the galleys; from the docks it caught the neighbouring buildings, and the Museum, which was close upon the harbour, was soon wrapt in flames. It was to the Museum, with its seven hundred thousand volumes, that Alexandria owed much of its renown, and it is for the men of letters who had studied there that the history of the Ptolemies is chiefly valuable. It had been begun by the first of the Lagidæ, and had grown not only with his son and grandson, but, when the love of learning and of virtue had left the latter princes of the family, they still added to the library, and Alexandria was

J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii.

Amm. Marcellinus, lib. xxii. 16.

still the first school of science, and, next to Athens, the point to which all men of learning looked. Cæsar, the historian of his own great deeds, could have told us of the pain with which he saw the flames rise from the rolls of dry papyrus, and of the trouble which he took to quench the fire; but his guilty silence leads us to believe that he found the burning pile an useful flank to the line of walls that his little body of troops had to guard, and we must fear that the feelings of the scholar were for the time lost in those of the soldier.

(8) Cæsar must have known that, in keeping the young princes and their guardian, he was keeping traitors in his camp. This was first shown by Arsinoë making her escape from the palace, and reaching the quarters of Achillas in safety; and then by Pothinus being found out in sending word to Achillas of Cæsar's want of stores, and in urging him not to give over his attacks upon the palace. Upon this Cæsar put Pothinus to death. J. Cæsar, Bell. Civ. iii.

(9) The Alexandrians were not slow in preparing to make another attack on Cæsar's quarter of the city. They brought up troops from the other parts of Egypt; they drew a triple trench across the streets to stop a sally; they armed the slaves, while the richer citizens served out daily supplies of food to the soldiers. But in the midst of this zeal a serious quarrel broke out between the general Achillas and the princess Arsinoë, who had escaped from Cæsar's quarters. This ended in Arsinoë having Achillas murdered, and thus she became mistress of the Egyptian army. Indeed she was for the time sovereign of Egypt, as her elder sister Cleopatra, and her two brothers, were prisoners in Cæsar's camp. Arsinoë made her eunuch Ganimedes general, and, though not eighteen years of age, she urged forward the war with the energy of an old soldier. The city of Alexandria had no wells or springs, but was supplied with fresh water by a canal from the Nile, from which the poorer citizens fetched it, while it was led by pipes into large cisterns under the palace and principal houses. One of these is so large that two stories of columns, each eighteen in number, with twenty-two half columns against the walls, uphold the arches with which it is roofed (see Fig. 23). From some of these cisterns Cæsar's troops were supplied; and Ganimedes proposed to deprive them of A. Hirtius, Bell. Alex.

their supply by pumping sea-water into those pipes which led into the Bruchium. The Roman soldiers were at first surprised to find the water brackish; and day by day cistern after cistern became unfit for use. The cause was then no longer doubtful; as water became scarce they began to learn its value, and the alarm through the legions was extreme; Cæsar gave orders to the centurions that they should put aside all other work, and turn their whole energy to digging wells; and notwithstanding the belief which had been entertained for three centuries, that the place contained no springs, in one night they found water enough for the whole city.

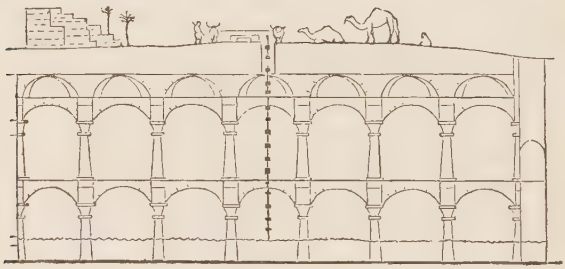


Fig. 23.

(10) The next plan of the Alexandrians was to attack Cæsar's ships in the harbour. As they had no fleet at sea they brought round the guard-ships which had been anchored in the mouths of the Nile to collect the customs duty; they refitted the old ships in the docks; they took beams out of their houses to make oars; and in a short time a fleet of twenty-seven large galleys, of four and five banks of oars each, with several smaller vessels, appeared off the island of Pharos. The Alexandrian ships of war were the same in build as Cæsar's. They differed in little but the ornaments. They had the same sharp beak in front to strike against the enemy, and the same two rudders near the stern. In both the steersman stood on deck, under shelter of a small hut, open in front; and in Cleopatra's vessels this was roofed with a covering in the shape of an elephant's head, in imitation of the elephant-shaped helmet peculiar to the Egyptian queens,

and shown upon their coins (see Fig. 24). From this helmet-shaped covering for the steersman, that part of the vessel has been called the helm; and from its Latin name, *Galea*, the vessel itself has been called a galley. Cæsar had only fifteen large galleys and a few of smaller size; but, trusting to the skill and courage of his Rhodian sailors, he ordered them to row out and give battle to the Egyptian fleet. It was not easy to get out of the harbour in the face of the enemy, as only four ships at a time could cross the shallows formed by the sand-banks at the mouth; and these were immediately attacked on all sides by the Alexandrian ships. But the skill of the Rhodians overcame the difficulty. To every attacking prow, a Rhodian prow was quickly turned; not a side was struck; not an oar was broken; and under cover of the first four the rest of Cæsar's galleys rowed out of the great port. At this time the house-tops of the city and island, from the promontory of Lochias to the lighthouse, were covered with anxious spectators, shouting to those who were near, making signs to those who were at a distance, giving their wishes and their prayers where they were too far off to give any other help. The fate of Cæsar's army was to be settled by the skill and courage of his sailors, and fortunately these did not fail him. In this battle two Egyptian ships were taken, three were sunk, and the rest fled for safety to the shore and to the island, where they were guarded by the troops which held that side of the harbour.

Fig. 24.

A. Hirtius, Bell. Alex.

(11) In order to avoid this disadvantage in his future naval battles, Cæsar determined to attack the island of Pharos. For this purpose, he placed his cohorts in his boats, and crossing over the harbour, carried the island by storm, and seized the castle at that end of the Heptastadium, the mole which joined the island to the city. The Alexandrians still held the larger castle at the city end of the mole; and Cæsar's next attack was against this. But here he was beaten. His soldiers were driven back into the boats; his own boat was sunk by the crowds that rushed into it, while he himself escaped only because he had a few minutes before

thrown himself into the water, and swum to a more distant vessel. He had with him at the time some papers, which he saved with difficulty; and this gave rise to the story, that he swam through the waves with one hand, while with the other he held overhead the Commentaries of his wars. In this defeat, the Romans lost four hundred soldiers, and as many sailors; and Cæsar lost his scarlet chlamys, his cloak, the mark of his rank as general, which the Alexandrians, in their joy, hung upon a pole, and fixed up in the middle of the city as a trophy.

Plutarch. in Vitâ.

Appian. Bell. Civ. ii.

(12) After this struggle, the two parties agreed to a truce. The Alexandrians were tired of the cruel government of Arsinoë and her slave Ganimedes, and they wanted their king, who was Cæsar's prisoner. And Cæsar, notwithstanding the false and fickle character of the people, so far trusted the young Ptolemy's seeming goodwill towards him, and promises of friendship, as to send him to the Alexandrian army to take possession of the throne of his forefathers, and to heal the troubles of the kingdom. The crafty Ptolemy seemed unwilling to depart; he begged to be allowed to stay in the Bruchium with his friend Cæsar; he even shed tears on going. But he was no sooner out of reach of his Roman guards, than he showed himself a true Alexandrian. He wiped his tears, forgot his promises, and turned all his energies to strengthen the army and dislodge Cæsar from the Bruchium.

A. Hirtius, Bell. Alex.

(13) The Alexandrians had stationed a small fleet of light vessels at the Canobic mouth of the Nile, to cut off Cæsar's supplies of food, which were sent by sea from Syria; and, as reports had lately reached the camps that an army was on its march from that country to Cæsar's help, it became important for him to disperse those vessels. He sent against them a fleet of his own, under the command of Euphranor the Rhodian, who had manœuvred the ships so successfully in the former battle, and he placed on board of it a body of troops under the command of Tiberius Nero. Euphranor was badly supported by the other captains; he led his own ship bravely, and perhaps rashly, against the Egyptians; but, as he was not followed by the rest, its sides were crushed by the enemy's prows, it sunk in deep water, and he was

drowned with all his crew. The rest of Cæsar's fleet returned to Alexandria.

(14) About this time, Mithridates of Pergamus arrived before Pelusium with the troops, which he brought from Cilicia and Syria, to help Cæsar. He stormed the walls of that city, on the day of his arrival, and took the place; and his soldiers rested after their march within the Egyptian fortified town. He then marched towards Memphis, meaning to cross the Nile near Heliopolis. At first the Jews of that neighbourhood took arms against him. But they gave way to the letters which he had brought from their countrymen at Jerusalem; and he was soon followed by a body of three thousand Syrian Jews, under Antipater, who were hastening to support Cæsar. Josephus, Antiq. xiv. 8.

In the meantime, Ptolemy sent a body of troops from Alexandria to oppose Mithridates, at his passage of the river; and on these receiving a check, he followed with his whole army. Cæsar also, at the same time, marched to the assistance of Mithridates; and they were able to unite their forces before they fought with the Alexandrians. Ptolemy was then defeated in several battles, near the head of the Delta, and was forced to keep his troops within his fortified camp, behind one of the deep canals. But Cæsar and Mithridates stormed the camp, and routed the Alexandrians, who fled in disorder to their ships on the Nile; and in one of these, which was sunk by the weight of the flying crowds, the young Ptolemy was drowned. A. Hirtius, Bell. Alex.

(15) Immediately after this victory, Cæsar hastened with his cavalry to Alexandria. The citizens had given over all thoughts of further resistance to his arms; they came out to meet him in the dress of suppliants, carrying out the statues of their gods; and he then marched into that part of the city which had before been held by his enemies. He was then master of Egypt; and it was his business to settle the government for the future. He ordered that the will of Ptolemy Auletes should be obeyed; and, as the elder son was dead, he appointed the younger Ptolemy, a boy of eleven years of age, to be Cleopatra's colleague on the throne. Cæsar's love for Cleopatra, who had just borne him a son named Cæsarion, was not so strong as his ambition; and, after having been above a year in Egypt, he left her to

govern the kingdom in her own name, but on his behalf; and sailed for Italy, taking with him the sixth legion, and the princess Arsinoë as his prisoner. While engaged in this petty warfare in Alexandria, Cæsar had been appointed dictator in Rome, where his power was exercised by Mark Antony, his master of the horse; and, for above six months, he had not written one letter home, as though ashamed to write about the foolish difficulty he had entangled himself in, until he had got out of it.

Cicero, ad Att. xi. 15, 17.

(16) On reaching Rome, Cæsar amused the people and himself with a grand triumphal show, in which, among the other prisoners of war, the princess Arsinoë followed his car in chains; and, among the works of art and nature which were got together to prove to the gazing crowd the greatness of his conquests, was that remarkable African animal, the camelopard, then for the first time seen in Rome. In one chariot was a statue of the Nile-god; and in another, the Pharos lighthouse, having on the top a star or fire, with painted flames. Nor was this the last of Cæsar's triumphs; for soon afterwards Cleopatra, and her brother Ptolemy, then twelve years old, who was called her husband, came to Rome as his guests, and dwelt for some time with him in his house.

Dion Cass. lib. xliii.

Florus, lib. iv. 2.

(17) Although the history of Egypt, at this time, is almost lost in that of Rome, we must not be led too far out of our path. It is enough to say, that within five years of Cæsar's landing in Alexandria, and finding that, by the death of Pompey, he was master of the world, he paid his own life as the forfeit for crushing his country's liberty. The queen of Egypt, with her infant son Cæsarion, about four years old, was then in Rome, living with Cæsar in his villa on the further side of the Tiber. On Cæsar's death, her first wish was to get the child acknowledged by the Roman senate, as her colleague on the throne of Egypt, and as a friend of the Roman people. With this view, she applied to Cicero for help, making him an offer of some books or works of art; but he was offended at her haughtiness, and refused her gifts. Besides, she was more likely to thwart than to help the cause for which he was struggling. He was alarmed at hearing that she was soon

Cicero, ad Atticum, xiv. 8, 20; xv. 15.

to give birth to another child. He did not want any more Cæsars. He hoped she would miscarry, as he wished she had before miscarried. So he bluntly refused to undertake her cause. On this, she thought herself unsafe in Rome; she fled privately, and reached Egypt in safety with Cæsarion; but we hear of no second child by Julius.

(18) The Romans were now masters of Egypt, and Cleopatra could hardly hope to reign but by the help of one of the great generals, who were struggling for the sovereignty of the republic. Among these was the young Sextus Pompeius, whose large fleet made him for a time master of Sicily, and of the sea; and he was said to have been admitted by the queen of Egypt as a lover. But he was able to be of but little use to her in return for her favours, as his fleet was soon defeated by Octavianus. Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

(19) Cæsar had left behind him, in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, a large body of Roman troops, in the pay and nominally under the orders of Cleopatra, but in reality to keep Egypt in obedience. There they lived, as if above all Egyptian law or Roman discipline, indulging in the vices of that luxurious capital. When some of them, in a riot, killed two sons of Bibulus the consul, Cleopatra was either afraid or unable to punish the murderers; the most she could do was to get them sent in chains into Syria to the grieving father, who, with true greatness of mind, sent them back to the Egyptian legions, saying that it was for the senate to punish them, not for him. Valerius Max. iv. 1. B.C. 45.

(20) While Ptolemy, her second husband, was a boy, and could claim no share of the government, he was allowed to live with all the outward show of royalty; but as soon as he reached the age of fifteen, at which he might call himself her equal, and would soon be her master, Cleopatra had him put to death. She had then reigned four years with her elder brother, and four years with her younger brother; and from that time forward she reigned alone, calling her child by Cæsar her colleague on the throne (see Fig. 25). Porphyrius, ap. Scalig. B.C. 44.

Fig. 25.

(21) At a time when vice and luxury claimed the thoughts of all who were not busy in the civil wars, we cannot hope to find the fruits of genius in Alexandria; but the mathematics are plants of a hardy growth, and are not choked so easily as poetry and history. Sosigenes was then the first astronomer in Egypt; and Julius Cæsar was guided by his advice in setting right the Roman Calendar. He was a careful and painstaking mathematician, and, after fixing the length of the year at three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, he three times changed the beginning of the year, in his doubts as to the day on which the equinox fell; for the astronomer could then only make two observations in a year, with a view to learn the time of the equinox, by seeing when the sun shone in the plane of the equator.

Pliny, lib. xviii. 57.

(22) Photinus, the mathematician, wrote both on arithmetic and geometry, and was usually thought the author of a mathematical work, published in the name of the queen, called the Canon of Cleopatra.

Abul-Pharagius.

(23) Didymus was another of the writers that we hear of at that time. He was a man of great industry, both in reading and writing; but when we are told that he wrote three thousand five hundred volumes, or rolls, it rather teaches us that a great many rolls of papyrus would be wanted to make a modern book, than what number of books he wrote. These writings were mostly on verbal criticism, and all have long since perished, except some notes or Scholia on the Iliad and Odyssey which bear his name, and are still printed at the foot of the page in some editions of Homer.

Suidas.

(24) Dioscorides, the physician of Cleopatra, has left a work on herbs and minerals, and on their uses in medicine; also on poisons and poisonous bites. To these he has added a list of prescriptions. His works have been much read in all ages, and have only been set aside by the discoveries of the last few centuries.

(25) Serapion, another physician, was perhaps of this reign. He followed medicine rather than surgery; and, while trusting chiefly to his experience, gained in clinical or bedside practice, was laughed at by the surgeons as an empiric.

Celsus, lib. i.

(26) The small temple at Hermonthis, near Thebes, seems to have been built in this reign, and it is dedicated to Mandoo, or the sun, in the name of Cleopatra and Cæsarion (see Fig. 26). It is unlike the older Egyptian temples, in being much less of a fortress; for what in them is a strongly-walled courtyard, with towers to guard the narrow doorway, is here a small space between two double rows of columns, wholly open, without walls, while the roofed building is the same as in the older temples. Near it is a small pool, seventy feet square, with stone sides, which was used in the funerals and other religious rites. Mandoo, the god of this temple, would seem to have belonged originally to Lower Egypt, though not unknown in Thebes in the time of Rameses II.; but it is only in these later days that we find temples built for his worship in the Upper country. We have before seen, that when Thebes fell from its high rank, Mandoo-Ra usurped the place of Amun-Ra on some of the monuments of that once proud city; and that at some later time the priests of Thebes were allowed to displace Mandoo, and give back to Amun-Ra his own honours. Now, again, we find the worship of Mandoo in the neighbourhood of Thebes, though not admitted into that city; and in the next reign we shall see a temple built for his worship in Nubia.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

Denon, pl. 51.

(27) The murder of Cæsar did not raise the character of the Romans, or make them more fit for self-government. It was followed by the well-known civil war; and when, by the battle of Philippi and the death of Brutus and Cassius, his party was again uppermost, the Romans willingly bowed their necks to his adopted son Octavianus, and his friend Mark Antony.

(28) It is not easy to determine which side Cleopatra meant to take in the war between Antony and the murderers of Cæsar. She did not openly declare herself, and she probably waited to join that which fortune favoured. Allienus had been sent to her by Dolobella to ask for such troops as she could spare to help Antony, and he led a little army of four Roman legions out of Egypt into Syria; but when there, he added them to the force which Cassius had assembled against Antony. Whether he acted through treachery

Appianus, Bell. Civ. iv.

Cicero, Epist. xii. 11.

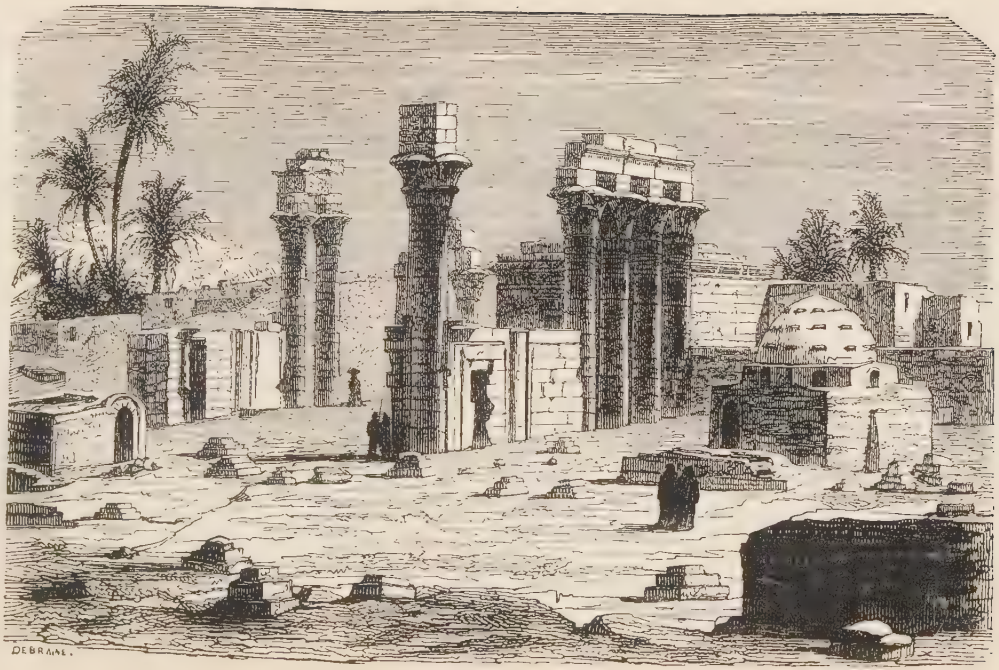


Fig. 26.—Ruins of Hermonthis.

to the queen, or by her orders, is doubtful, for Cassius felt more gratitude to Allienus than to Cleopatra. Serapion, also, the Egyptian governor of Cyprus, joined what was then the stronger side, and sent all the ships that he had in his ports to the assistance of Cassius. Cleopatra herself was getting ready another large fleet; but as, before it sailed, the war was over, and Brutus and Cassius dead, she said it was meant to help Octavianus and Antony. Thus, by the acts of her generals and her own hesitation, Cleopatra fairly laid herself open to the reproach of ingratitude to her late friend Cæsar, or, at least, of thinking that the interests of his son Cæsarion were opposed to those of his nephew Octavianus; and accordingly, as Antony was passing through Cilicia with his army, he sent orders to her to come from Egypt and meet him at Tarsus, to answer the charge of having helped Brutus and Cassius in the late war.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton. B.C. 42.

(29) Dellius, the bearer of the message, showed that he understood the meaning of it, by beginning himself to pay court to her as his queen. He advised her to go, like Juno in the Iliad, "tricked in her best attire," and told her that she had nothing to fear from the kind and gallant Antony. On this, she sailed for Cilicia laden with money and treasures for presents, full of trust in her beauty and power of pleasing. She had won the heart of Cæsar when, though younger, she was less skilled in the arts of love; and she was still only twenty-five years old; and, carrying with her such gifts and treasures as became her rank, she entered the River Cydnus with the Egyptian fleet in a magnificent galley. The stern was covered with gold; the sails were of scarlet cloth; and the silver oars beat time to the music of flutes and harps. The queen, dressed like Venus, lay under an awning embroidered with gold, while pretty dimpled boys, like Cupids, stood on each side of the sofa fanning her. Her maidens, dressed like sea-nymphs and graces, handled the silken tackle and steered the vessel. As she approached the town of Tarsus, the winds wafted the perfumes and the scent of the burning incense to the shores, which were lined with crowds who had come out to see her land; and Antony, who was seated on the tribunal waiting to receive her, found himself left alone.

(30) Tarsus on the River Cydnus was situated at the foot of the wooded slopes of Mount Taurus, and it guarded the great pass in that range between the Phrygian tribes and the Phenician tribes. It was a city half Greek and half Asiatic, and had from the earliest days been famed for ship-building and commerce. Mount Taurus supplied it with timber, and around the mouth of its river, as it widens into a quiet lake, were the ancient dockyards which had made the ships of Tarshish proverbial with the Hebrew writers. Its merchants, enriched by industry and enlightened by foreign trade, had ornamented their city with public buildings, and established a school of Greek learning. Its philosophers, however, were more known as travelling teachers than as scholars. No learned men came to Tarsus, but it sent forth its rhetoricians in its own ships, who spread themselves as teachers over the neighbouring coasts. In Rome there were more professors of rhetoric, oratory, and poetry from Tarsus than from Alexandria or Athens. Athenodorus Cordylion, the Stoic, taught Cato; Athenodorus, the son of Sandon, taught Cæsar; Nestor, a little later, taught the young Marcellus; while Demetrius was one of the first men of learning who sailed to the distant island of Britain. This school, in the next generation, sent forth Apollonius of Tyana, the pretended worker of miracles, who taught an eastern form of Paganism, and the Apostle Paul, who taught Christianity throughout the same coasts; but Tarsus was now to be amused by the costly follies of Cleopatra.

Strabo, lib. xiv.

Plutarch. De oraculis.

(31) On her landing, she invited Antony and his generals to a dinner, at which the whole of the dishes placed before them were of gold set with precious stones, and the room and the twelve couches were ornamented with purple and gold. On his praising the splendour of the sight, as passing anything he had before seen, she said it was a trifle, and begged that he would take the whole of it as a gift from her. The next day he again dined with her, and brought a larger number of his friends and generals, and was of course startled to see a costliness which made that of the day before seem nothing; and she again gave him the whole of the gold upon the table, and gave to each of his friends the couch upon which he sat.

Athenæus, lib. iv. 11.

(32) These costly and delicate dinners were continued every day; and, one evening, when Antony playfully blamed her wastefulness, and said that it was not possible to fare in a more costly manner, she told him that the dinner of the next day should cost ten thousand sestertia, or sixty thousand pounds sterling. This he would not believe, and laid her a wager that she would fail in her promise. When the day came, the dinner was as grand and dainty as those of the former days; but when Antony called upon her to count up the cost of the meats and wines, she said that she did not reckon them, but that she should herself soon eat and drink the ten thousand sestertia. She wore in her ears two pearls, the largest known in the world, which, like the diamonds of European kings, had come to her with her crown and kingdom, and were together valued at that large sum. On the servants removing the meats, they set before her a glass of vinegar, and she took one of these earrings from her ear and dropped it into the glass, and when dissolved drank it off. Plancus, one of the guests, who had been made judge of the wager, snatched the other from the queen's ear, and saved it from being drunk up like the first, and then declared that Antony had lost his bet. The pearl which was saved was afterwards cut in two, and made into a pair of earrings for the statue of Venus in the Pantheon at Rome; and the fame of the wager may be said to have made the two half pearls at least as valuable as the two whole ones. Pliny, lib. ix. 58.

(33) The beauty, sweetness, and gaiety of this young queen, joined to her great powers of mind, which were all turned to the art of pleasing, had quite overcome Antony; he had sent for her as her master, but he was now her slave. Her playful wit was delightful; her voice was as an instrument of many strings; she spoke readily to every ambassador in his own language; and was said to be the only sovereign of Egypt who could understand the languages of all her subjects; Greek, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Troglodytic, Hebrew, Arabic, and Syriac. With these charms, at the age of five-and-twenty, the luxurious Antony could deny her nothing. The first favour which she asked of her lover equals any cruelty that we have met with in this history: Plutarch. Vit. Anton. Josephus, Antiq. xv. 4.

it was, that he would have her sister Arsinoë put to death. Cæsar had spared her life, after his triumph, through love of Cleopatra; but he was mistaken in the heart of his mistress; she would have been then better pleased at Arsinoë's death; and Antony, at her bidding, had her murdered in the temple of Diana, at Ephesus.

(34) Though Fulvia, the faithful wife of Antony, could scarcely keep together his party at Rome against the power of Octavianus, his colleague in the triumvirate, and though Labienus, with the Parthian legions, was ready to march into Syria against him, yet he was so entangled in the artful nets of Cleopatra, that she led him captive to Alexandria; and there the old warrior fell into every idle amusement, and offered up at the shrine of pleasure one of the greatest of sacrifices, the sacrifice of his time. The lovers visited each other every day, and the waste of their entertainments passed belief. Philotas, a physician who was following his studies at Alexandria, told Plutarch's grandfather that he was once invited to see Antony's dinner cooked, and, among other meats, were eight wild boars roasting whole; and the cook explained to him that, though there were only twelve guests, yet as each dish had to be roasted to a single turn of the spit, and Antony did not know at what hour he should dine, it was necessary to cook at least eight dinners. But the most costly of the luxuries then used in Egypt were the scents and the ointments. Gold, silver, and jewels, as Pliny remarks, will pass to a man's heirs, even clothes will last a few months or weeks, but scents fly off and are lost at the first moment that they are admired; and yet ointments, like the attar of roses, which melted and gave out their scent, and passed into air when placed upon the back of the hand, as the coolest part of the body, were sold for four hundred denarii the pound. But the ointment was not meant to be used quite so wastefully. It was usually sealed up in small alabaster jars, which were made in the town of Alabastron on the east of the Nile, and thence received their name. These were long in shape, without a foot, and had a narrow mouth. They were meant never to be opened, but to let the scent escape slowly and sparingly through the porous stone (see Fig. 27). In these Egyptian jars scented ointment was

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

Pliny, lib. xiii. 3, 4.

carried by trade to the banks of the Tigris and to the shores of the Mediterranean; and such was the jar broken in pious zeal for the anointment of our Saviour shortly before his crucifixion.

Mark, ch. xiv.

Fig. 27.

(35) The tenth and eleventh years of the queen's reign were marked by a famine through the land, caused by the Nile's not rising to the wished-for height, and by the want of the usual overflow; and an inscription which was written both in the Greek and Egyptian languages declares the gratitude of the Theban priests and elders and citizens to Callimachus, the prefect of the Theban taxes, who did what he could to lessen the sufferings in that city. The citizens of Alexandria on those years received from the government a smaller gift of corn than usual, and the Jews then felt their altered rank in the state. They were told that they were not citizens, and accordingly received no portion whatever out of the public granaries, but were left, like the Egyptians, to take care of themselves. From this time forward there was an unceasing quarrel between Greeks and Jews in Alexandria. Those feelings of humanity which bind the arms of the conquerors, and form a rule of conduct under the name of the Law of Nations, have seldom embraced more than a small portion of the human race. They favour those only from whom we hope to receive a like favour in return. The lawyers tell us that the Law of Nations for modern Europe used not to reach beyond the whole of Christendom. With the Jews, all except the kindred Arab tribes were beyond the care of the Jewish law; with the Greeks, all except those who spoke some dialect of Greek might be treated as barbarians and slaves. The first Ptolemy, indeed, while treating the Egyptians as an enslaved race, had wished the Greeks and Jews to live together as fellow-citizens. But his wise rules were now no longer obeyed, and thereby Alexandria often became the seat of civil war.

Seneca, Nat. Quæst. iv. 1.

B.C. 41

Inscript. Boeckh. 4717.

Josephus, in Apion. ii.

(36) Cleopatra, who held her power at the pleasure of the Roman legions, spared no pains to please Antony. She

had borne him first a son named Ptolemy, and then a son and daughter, twins, Alexander Helius and Cleopatra Selene, or *Sun* and *Moon*. She gamed, she drank, she hunted, she reviewed the troops with him, and, to humour his coarser tastes, she followed him in his midnight rambles through the city in the dress of a servant; and nothing that youth, beauty, wealth, and elegance could do to throw a cloak over the grossness of vice and crime was forgotten by her. The biographer thought it waste of time to mention all Cleopatra's arts and Antony's follies, but the story of his fishing was not to be forgotten. One day, when sitting in the boat with her, he caught but little, and was vexed at her seeing his want of success. So he ordered one of his men to dive into the water and put upon his hook a fish which had been before taken. Cleopatra, however, saw what was being done, and quietly took the hint for a joke of her own. The next day she brought a larger number of friends to see the fishing, and when Antony let down his line, she ordered one of her divers to put on the hook a salted fish. The line was then drawn up and the fish landed amid no little mirth of their friends; and Cleopatra playfully consoled him, saying: "Well, general, you may leave fishing to us petty princes of Pharos and Canopus; your game is cities, provinces, and kingdoms."

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

Plutarch. In Vitâ.

(37) Antony's eldest son by Fulvia came to Alexandria at this time, and lived in the same princely style with his father. Philotas the physician lived in his service, and one day at supper, when Philotas silenced a tiresome talker with a foolish sophism, the young Antony gave him as a reward the whole sideboard of plate. But in the middle of this gaiety and feasting Antony was recalled to Europe, by letters which told him that his wife and brother had been driven out of Rome by Octavianus. Before, however, he reached Rome, his wife Fulvia was dead; and wishing to strengthen his party, he at once married Octavia, the sister of Octavianus and widow of Marcellus.

(38) In that year Herod passed through Egypt on his way to Rome to claim Judæa as his kingdom. He came through Arabia to Pelusium, and thence he sailed to Alexandria. Cleopatra, who wanted his services, gave him honourable entertainment in her

Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. i. 11; B.C. 39.

capital, and made him great offers in order to persuade him to take the command of her army. But the Jewish prince saw that a kingdom was to be gained by offering his services to Antony and Octavianus; and he went on to Rome. There, through the friendship of Antony, he was declared king of Judæa by the senate. He then returned to Syria to collect an army and to win the kingdom which had been granted to him; and, by the help of Sosius, Antony's lieutenant, he had conquered Jerusalem when the war broke out between Antony and Octavianus.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. i. 13.

(39) In the next year Antony was himself in Syria, carrying on the war which ended with the battle of Actium, and he sent to Alexandria to beg Cleopatra to join him there. On her coming, he made her perhaps the largest gift which lover ever gave to his mistress: he gave her the wide provinces of Phenicia, Cœle-Syria, Cyprus, part of Cilicia, part of Judæa, and part of Arabia Nabatæa. These large gifts only made her ask for more, and she begged him to put to death Herod, king of Judæa, and Malichus, king of Arabia Nabatæa, the former of whom had advised Antony to break through the disgraceful ties which bound him to Cleopatra, as the only means of saving himself from being crushed by the rising power of Octavianus. She asked to have the whole of Arabia and Judæa given to her. But Antony had not so far forgotten himself as to yield to these commands; and he only gave her the balsam country round Jericho, and a rent-charge of two hundred talents, or thirty thousand pounds, a year, on the revenues of Judæa. On receiving this large addition to her kingdom, and perhaps in honour of Antony, who had then lost all power in Italy, but was the real king of Egypt and its Greek provinces, Cleopatra began to count the years of her reign afresh: what was really the sixteenth of her reign, and had been called the sixteenth of Ptolemy, her elder brother, she called the first of her own reign, and she reckoned them in the same way till her death. Cleopatra had accompanied Antony on his expedition against Armenia, as far as the River Euphrates, and returned through Damascus to Judæa. There she was politely received by her enemy Herod, who was too much in fear of Antony to take his

Lib. I. 18.]

Porphyrius, ap. Scalig.

B.C. 36.

Josephus, Antiq. xv. 4.

revenge on her. She farmed out to him the revenues of her parts of Arabia and Judæa, and was accompanied by him on her way towards Egypt.

(40) But, after wondering at the wasteful feasts and gifts, in which pearls and provinces were alike trifled with, we are reminded that even Cleopatra was of the family of the Lagidæ, and that she was well aware how much the library of the Museum had added to the glory of Alexandria. It had been burnt by the Roman troops under Cæsar, and, to make amends for this, Antony gave her the large library of the city of Pergamus, by which Eumenes and Attalus had hoped to raise a school that should equal the Museum of Alexandria. Cleopatra placed these two hundred thousand volumes in the temple of Serapis; and Alexandria again held the largest library in the world; while Pergamus ceased to be a place of learning. By the help of this new library, the city still kept its trade in books and its high rank as a school of letters; and, when the once proud kingdom of Egypt was a province of Rome, and when almost every trace of the monarchy was lost, and half a century afterwards Philo the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria asked "Where are now the Ptolemies?" the historian could have found an answer by pointing to the mathematical schools and the library of the Serapeum.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

(41) But to return to our history. When Antony left Cleopatra, he marched against the Parthians, and on his return he again entered Alexandria in triumph, leading Artavasdes king of Armenia chained behind his chariot as he rode in procession through the city. He soon afterwards made known his plans for the government of Egypt and the provinces. He called together the Alexandrians in the Gymnasium, and, seating himself and Cleopatra on two golden thrones, he declared her son Cæsarion her colleague, and that they should hold Egypt, Cyprus, Africa, and Cœle-Syria. To her sons by himself he gave the title of "kings the children of kings;" and to Alexander, though still a child, he gave Armenia and Media, with Parthia when it should be conquered; and to Ptolemy he gave Phenicia, Syria, and Cilicia. Cleopatra wore the sacred robe of Isis, and took the title of the "New Isis," while the young Alexander wore a Median

Strabo, lib. xi. 14.
Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

dress with turban and tiara, and the little Ptolemy a long cloak and slippers, with a bonnet encircled by a diadem, like the successors of Alexander. Antony himself wore an eastern scimetar by his side, and a royal diadem round his head, as being not less a sovereign than Cleopatra. To Cleopatra he then gave the whole of his Parthian booty, and his prisoner Tigranes, the son of the Parthian king.

Æneas Flor. iv. 9.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. i. 18.

(42) But, notwithstanding Antony's love for Cleopatra, her falsehood and cruelty were such that when his power in Rome fell he could no longer trust her. He even feared that she might have him poisoned, and would not eat or drink in her palace without having the food first tasted by herself. But she had no such thoughts, and only laughed at him for his distrust. One day, to prove her power, and, at the same time, her good faith, she had the flowers with which he was to be crowned, as he reclined at her dinner-table, dipped in deadly poison. Antony dined with these round his head, while she wore a crown of fresh flowers. During the dinner Cleopatra playfully took off her garland and dipped it in her cup to flavour the wine, and Antony did the same with his poisoned flowers, steeping them in his own cup of wine. He even raised it to his lips to drink, when she hastily caught hold of his hand. "Now," said she, "I am the enemy against whom you have latterly been so careful. If I could have endured to live without you that draught would have given me the opportunity." She then ordered the wine to be taken to one of the condemned criminals, and sent Antony out to see that the man died on drinking it.

Pliny, lib. xxi. 9.

(43) On the early coins of Cleopatra we see her head on the one side and the eagle or the cornucopia on the other side, with the name of "*Queen Cleopatra*" (see Fig. 22). After she had borne Antony children we find the words round their heads, "*Of Antony, on the conquest of Armenia;*" "*Of Cleopatra the queen, and of the kings the children of kings*" (see Fig. 28). On the later coins we find the head of Antony joined with hers, as king and queen, and he is styled "*the emperor*" and she "*the young goddess*" (see Fig. 29). Cleopatra was perhaps the last Greek sovereign that bore the title of god. Nor did it

Vaillant, Hist. Ptol.

seem unsuitable to her, so common had the Greeks of Asia and Egypt made that holy name, by giving it to their kings and even to their king's families and favourites. But the use of the word made no change in their religious opinions; they never for a moment supposed that the persons whom they so styled had any share in the creation and government of the world.

Fig. 28.

Fig. 29.

(44) The death of Julius Cæsar and afterwards of Brutus and Cassius had left Antony with the chief sway in the Roman world; but his life of pleasure in Egypt had done much to forfeit it; and Octavianus, afterwards called Augustus, had been for some time rising in power against him. His party, however, was still strong enough in Rome to choose for consul his friend Sosius, who put the head of Antony on one side of his coins, and the Egyptian eagle and thunderbolt on the other. Soon afterwards Antony was himself chosen as consul elect for the coming year, and he then struck his last coins in Egypt. The rude copper coins have on one side the name of "*The queen, the young goddess*," and on the other side of "*Antony, Consul a third*

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

Eckhel, vol. v. 314.

British Museum.

time" (see Fig. 30). But he never was consul for the third time; before the day of entering on the office he was made an enemy of Rome by the senate. Octavianus, however, would not declare war against him, but declared war against Cleopatra, or rather, as he said, against Mardion, her slave, Iris, her waiting-woman, and Charmion, another favourite woman; for these had the chief management of Antony's affairs. Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

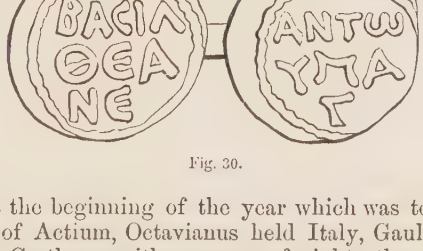


Fig. 30.

(45) At the beginning of the year which was to end with the battle of Actium, Octavianus held Italy, Gaul, Spain, and Carthage, with an army of eighty thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and a fleet of two hundred and fifty ships; Antony held Egypt, Ethiopia, and Cyrene, with one hundred thousand foot, twelve thousand horse, and five hundred ships; he was followed by the kings of Africa, Upper Cilicia, Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Commagene, and Thrace; and he received help from the kings of Pontus, Arabia, Judæa, Lycaonia, Galatia, and Media. Thus Octavianus held Rome, with its western provinces and hardy legions, while Antony held the Greek kingdom of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Cleopatra was confident of success, and as boastful as she was confident. Her most solemn mode of promising was to add, "as surely as I shall issue my decrees from the Roman Capitol." But the mind of Antony was ruined by his life of pleasure. He carried her with him into battle, at once his strength and his weakness, "the republic's firebrand, Egypt's foul disgrace," and he was beaten at sea by Octavianus, on the coast of Epirus, near Actium. This battle, which sealed the fate of Antony, of Egypt, and of Rome, B.C. 31. Dion Cassius, lib. l. 5. Lucanus, lib. x. 59.

would never have been spoken of in history if he had then had the courage to join his land forces; but he sailed away in a fright with Cleopatra, leaving an army larger than that of Octavianus, which would not believe that he was gone. They landed at Parætonium in Libya, where he remained in the desert with Aristocrates, the rhetorician, and one or two other friends, and sent Cleopatra forward to Alexandria. There she talked of carrying her ships across the isthmus to the head of the Red Sea, along the canal from Bubastis to the Bitter Lakes, and thence flying to some unknown land from the power of the conqueror. Antony soon, however, followed her, but not to join in society. He locked himself

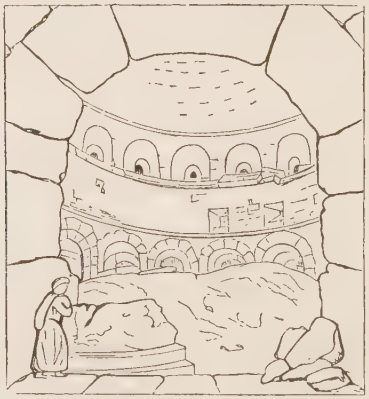


Fig. 31.

up in his despair in a vaulted tower or small fortress by the side of the harbour (see Fig. 31), which he named his Timonium, after Timon, the Athenian philosopher, who forsook the society of men. When the news, however, arrived that his land forces had joined Octavianus, and his allies had deserted him, he came out of his Timonium and joined the queen.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton. (46) In Alexandria Antony and Cleopatra only so far regained their courage as to forget their losses, and to plunge into the same round of costly feasts and shows that they had amused themselves with before

their fall; but, while they were wasting these few weeks in pleasure, Octavianus was moving his fleet and army upon Egypt.

(47) When he landed on the coast Egypt held three millions of people; he might have been met by three hundred thousand men able to bear arms. As for money, which has sometimes been called the sinews of war, though there might have been none in the treasury, yet it could not have been wanting in Alexandria. But the Egyptians, like the ass in the fable, had nothing to fear from a change of masters; they could hardly be kicked and cuffed worse than they had been; and, though they themselves were the prize struggled for, they looked on with the idle stare of a bystander. Some few of the garrisons made a show of holding out; but, as Antony had left the whole of his army in Greece when he fled away after the battle of Actium, he had lost all chance of safety.

(48) When Pelusium was taken it was by some said that Seleucus, the commander, had given it up by Cleopatra's orders; but the queen, to justify herself, put the wife and children of Seleucus into the hands of Antony to be punished if he thought fit. When Octavianus arrived in front of Alexandria he encamped not far from the hippodrome, a few miles from the Canobic or eastern gate. On this, Antony made a brisk sally, and, routing the Roman cavalry, returned to the city in triumph. On his way to the palace he met Cleopatra, whom he kissed, armed as he was, and recommended to her favour a brave soldier who had done good service in the battle. She gave the man a cuirass and helmet of gold; but he saw that Antony's cause was ruined; his new-gotten treasure made him selfish, and he went over to the enemy's camp that very night. The next morning Antony ordered out his forces, both on land and sea, to engage with those of Octavianus; but he was betrayed by his generals; his fleet and cavalry deserted him without a blow being struck; and his infantry, easily routed, retreated into the city.

(49) Cleopatra had never acted justly towards her Jewish subjects; and, during a late famine, had denied to them their share of the wheat distributed out of the public granaries to the citizens of Alexandria. The Jews in return showed no loyalty to Cleopatra, nor regret at

Josephus, in Apion. ii.

her enemy's success; and on this defeat of her troops her rage fell upon them. She made a boast of her cruelty towards them, and thought if she could have killed all the Jews with her own hand she should have been repaid for the loss of the city. On the other hand, Antony thought that he had been betrayed by Cleopatra, as she had received many messengers from Octavianus. To avoid his anger, therefore, she fled to a monument which she had built near the temple of Isis, and in which she had before placed her treasure, her gold, silver, emeralds, pearls, ebony, ivory, and cinnamon, together with a large quantity of flax and a number of torches, as though to burn herself and her wealth in one flame. Here she retired with two of her women, and secured herself with bars and bolts, and sent word to Antony that she was dead. Antony, when he heard it, believing that she had killed herself, and wishing not to be outdone in courage by a woman, plunged his sword into his breast. But the wound was not fatal, and, when Cleopatra heard of it, she sent to beg that he would come to her. Accordingly his servants carried him to the door of her monument. But the queen, in fear of treachery, would not suffer the door to be opened; but she let a cord down from the window, and she with her two women drew him up. Nothing could be more affecting than the sight to all who were near; Antony, covered with blood, in the agonies of death, stretching out his hands to Cleopatra, and she straining every nerve and every feature of her face with the effort she was making. He was at last lifted in at the window, but died soon afterwards. By this time the city was in the power of Octavianus; he had not found it necessary to storm the walls, for Antony's troops had all joined him, and he sent in Gallus to endeavour to take Cleopatra alive. This he succeeded in doing by drawing her into conversation at the door of her monument, while three men scaled the window and snatched out of her hand the dagger with which she would have stabbed herself.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

(50) Octavianus began by promising his soldiers two hundred and fifty drachms each as prize money, for not being allowed to plunder Alexandria. He soon afterwards entered the city, not on horseback armed at the head of his victorious legions, but on foot

Dion Cassius, lib. li. 5.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

leaning on the arm of the philosopher Arius; and, as he wished to be thought as great a lover of learning as of mercy, he gave out that he spared the place to the prayers of his Alexandrian friend. He called the Greek citizens together in the Gymnasium, and, mounting the tribunal, promised that they should not be hurt. Cleopatra's three children by Antony, who had not the misfortune to be of the same blood with the conqueror, were kindly treated and taken care of; while Cæsarion, her son by Julius Cæsar, who was betrayed by his tutor Rhodon while flying towards Ethiopia, was put to death as a rival. The flatterers of the conqueror would of course say that Cæsarion was not the son of Julius, but of Ptolemy, the elder of the two boys who had been called Cleopatra's husbands. The feelings of humanity might have answered, that if he was not the only son of the uncle to whom Octavianus owed everything, he was at least helpless and friendless, and that he never could trouble the undisputed master of the world; but Octavianus, with the heartless cruelty which murdered Cicero, and the cold caution which marked his character through life, listening to the remark of Arius, that there ought not to be two Cæsars, had him at once put to death.

Lucanus, lib. x. 360.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton.

(51) Octavianus gave orders that Cleopatra should be carefully guarded, lest she should put an end to her own life; he wished to carry her with him to Rome as the ornament of his triumph. He paid her a visit of condolence and consolation. He promised her she should receive honourable treatment. He allowed her to bury Antony. He threatened that her children should be punished if she hurt herself; but she deceived her guards and put herself to death, either by poison, or, as was more commonly thought, by the bite of an asp brought to her in a basket of fruit. She was thirty-nine years of age, having reigned twenty-two years, of which the last seven were in conjunction with Antony; and she was buried in his tomb with all regal splendour.

(52) Cleopatra had been a favourite name in Greece and with the royal families of Macedonia and Alexandria, for at least four hundred years. What prettier name could be given to a little girl in her cradle than to call her *the Pride of her Father?* But so disgraceful was the conduct of this

last queen of Egypt, that the name from her time very much went out of use.

(53) The death of Cleopatra was hailed at Rome as a relief from a sad disgrace, by others besides the flatterers of the conqueror. When governed by Julius Cæsar, and afterwards by Antony, the Romans sometimes fancied they were receiving orders from the barbarian queen to whom their master was a slave. When Antony was in arms against Rome, with forces gathered from the very north to the very south of the then known world, with rowers from Dacia, and bowmen from Ethiopia, his countrymen were not without alarm at Cleopatra's boast that she would yet make her power felt in the Capitol; and many feared that even when Antony was overthrown the conqueror might himself be willing to wear her chains. But the prudent Octavianus was in no danger of being dazzled by beauty. He saw clearly all that was within his reach; he did not want her help to the sovereignty of Egypt; and from the day that he entered the empty palace in Alexandria, his reign began as sole master of Rome and its dependent provinces.

Lucanus, lib. x. 65.
Horace, Od. iii. 6.
Od. i. 37.
Od. iv. 14.

(54) While we have in this history been looking at the Romans from afar, and only seen their dealings with foreign kings, we have been able to note some of the changes in their manners nearly as well as if we had stood in the Forum. When Epiphanes, Philometor, and Euergetes II. owed their crowns to Roman help, Rome gained nothing but thanks, and that weight in their councils which is fairly due to usefulness; the senate asked for no tribute, and the citizens took no bribes. But with the growth of power came the love of conquest and of its spoils. Macedonia was conquered in what might be called self-defence; in the reign of Cleopatra Cœce, Cyrene was won by fraud, and Cyprus was then seized without a plea. The senators were even more eager for bribes than the senate for provinces. The nobles who governed these wide provinces grew too powerful for the senate, and found that they could heap up ill-gotten wealth faster by patronising kings than by conquering them; and the Egyptian monarchy was left to stand in the reigns of Auletes and Cleopatra, because the Romans were still more greedy than when they seized Cyrene and Cyprus. And,

lastly, when the Romans were worn out by quarrels and the want of a steady government, and were ready to obey any master who could put a stop to civil bloodshed, they made Octavianus autocrat of Rome; he then gained for himself whatever he seized in the name of the republic, and he at once put an end to the Egyptian monarchy.

(55) Thus fell the family of the Ptolemies, a family that had perhaps done more for arts and letters than any that can be pointed out in history. Like other kings who have bought the praises of poets, orators, and historians, they may have misled the talents which they wished to guide, and have smothered the fire which they seemed to foster; but, in rewarding the industry of the mathematicians and anatomists, of the critics, commentators, and compilers, they seem to have been highly successful. It is true that Alexandria never sent forth works with the high tone of philosophy, the lofty moral aim, and the pure taste which mark the writings of Greece in its best ages, and which ennoble the mind and mend the heart; but it was the school to which the world long looked for knowledge in all those sciences which help the body and improve the arts of life, and which are sometimes called useful knowledge. Though great and good actions may not have been unknown in Alexandria, so few valued them that none took the trouble to record them. The well-paid writers never wrote the lives of the Ptolemies. The muse of history had no seat in the Museum, but it was almost the birth-place of anatomy, geometry, conic sections, geography, astronomy, and hydrostatics.

(56) If we retrace the steps by which this Græco-Egyptian monarchy rose and fell, we shall see that virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, care and thoughtlessness were for the most part followed by the rewards which to us seem natural. The Egyptian gold which first tempted the Greeks into the country, and then helped their energies to raise the monarchy, afterwards undermined those same energies, and was one of the causes of its overthrow.

(57) In Ptolemy Soter we see plain manners, careful plans, untiring activity, and a wise choice of friends. By him talents were highly paid wherever they were found; no service left unrewarded; the people trusted and taught the use of arms, their love gained by wise laws and even-handed

justice; docks, harbours, and fortresses built, schools opened; and by these means a great monarchy founded. Ptolemy was eager to fill the ranks of his armies with soldiers, and his new city with traders. Instead of trying to govern against the will of the people, to thwart or overlook their wishes and feelings, his utmost aim was to guide them, and to make Alexandria a more agreeable place of settlement than the cities of Asia Minor and Syria, for the thousands who were then pouring out of Greece on the check given to its trading industry by the overthrow of its freedom. Though every thinking man might have seen that the new government when it gained shape and strength would be a military despotism; yet his Greek subjects must have felt, while it was weak and resting on their good-will rather than on their habits, that they were enjoying many of the blessings of freedom. Had they then claimed a share in the government, they would most likely have gained it, and thereby they would have handed down those blessings to their children.

(58) Before the death of Ptolemy Soter the habits of the people had so closely entwined themselves round the throne, that Philadelphus was able to take the kingdom and the whole of its wide provinces at the hands of his father as a family estate. He did nothing to mar his father's wise plans, which then ripened into fruit-bearing. Trade crowded the harbours and markets, learning filled the schools, conquests rewarded the discipline of the fleets and armies; power, wealth, and splendour followed in due order. The blaze thus cast around the throne would by many kings have been made to stand in the place of justice and mildness, but under Philadelphus it only threw a light upon his good government. He was acknowledged both at home and abroad to be the first king of his age; Greece and its philosophers looked up to him as a friend and patron; and though as a man he must take rank far below his father, by whose wisdom the eminence on which he stood was raised, yet in all the gold and glitter of a king Philadelphus was the greatest of his family.

(59) The Egyptians had been treated with kindness by both of these Greek kings. As far as they had been able or willing to copy the arts of Greece they had been raised to a level with the Macedonians. The Egyptian worship and temples had been upheld, as if in obedience to the oft-repeated

answer of the Delphic oracle, that the gods should everywhere be worshipped according to the laws of the country. But Euergetes was much more of an Egyptian, and while he was bringing back the ancient splendour to the temples, the priests must have regained something of their former rank. But they had no hold on the minds of the soldiers. Had the mercenaries upon whom the power of the king rested been worshippers in the Egyptian temples, the priests might, as in the earlier times, like a body of nobles, have checked his power when too great, and at other times upheld it. But it was not so; and upon the whole, little seems to have been gained by the court becoming more Egyptian, while the army must have lost something of its Greek discipline and plainness of manners. Xenophon, Mem. iv. 3.

(60) But in the next reign the fruits of this change were seen to be most unfortunate. Philopator was an eastern despot, surrounded by eunuchs and drowned in pleasures. The country was governed by his women and vicious favourites. The army, which at the beginning of his reign amounted to seventy-three thousand men beside the garrisons, was at first weakened by rebellion, and before the end of his reign it had fallen to pieces like a rope of sand. Nothing, however, happened to prove his weakness to surrounding nations; Egypt was still the greatest of kingdoms, though Rome on the conquest of Carthage, and Syria under Antiochus the Great, were fast gaining ground upon it; but he left to his infant son a throne shaken to the very foundations.

(61) The ministers of Epiphanes, the infant autocrat, found the government without a head and without an army, the treasury without money, and the people without virtue or courage; and they at once threw the kingdom into the hands of the Romans to save it from being shared between the kings of Syria and Macedonia. Thus passed the first five reigns, the first one hundred and fifty years, the first half of the three centuries that the kingdom of the Ptolemies lasted. It was then rotten at the core with vice and luxury. Its population was lessening, its trade falling off, its treasury empty, its revenue too small for the wasteful expenses of the government; but nevertheless, in the eyes of surrounding nations, its trade and wealth seemed boundless. Taste, genius, and poetry had passed away; but mathematics,

surgery, and grammar still graced the Museum. The decline of art is shown upon the coins, and even in the shape of the letters upon the coins. On those of Cleopatra the engraver followed the fashion of the penman; the S is written like our C, the E has a round back, and the long O is formed like an M reversed.

(62) During the reigns of the later Ptolemies the kingdom was under the shield, but also under the sceptre of Rome. Its kings sent to Rome for help, sometimes against their enemies, and sometimes against their subjects; sometimes they humbly asked the senate for advice, and at other times were able respectfully to disobey the Roman orders. One by one the senate seized the provinces; Cœle-Syria, the coast of Asia Minor, Cyrene, and the island of Cyprus; and lastly, though the Ptolemies still reigned, they were counted among the clients of the Roman patrician to whom they looked up for patronage. From this low state Egypt could scarcely be said to fall when it became a part of the great empire of Augustus.

(63) During the reigns of the Ptolemies, the sculpture, the style of building, the religion, the writing, and the language of the Copts in the Thebaid were nearly the same as when their own kings were reigning in Thebes, with even fewer changes than usually creep in through time. They had all become less simple; and though it would be difficult and would want a volume by itself to trace these changes, and to show when they came into use, yet a few of them may be pointed out. The change of fashion must needs be slower in buildings, which are only raised by the untiring labour of years, and which when built stand for ages; but in the later temples we find less strength as fortresses, few obelisks or sphinxes, and no colossal statues; we no longer meet with vast caves or pyramids. The columns in a temple have several new patterns. The capitals, which used to be copied from the papyrus plant, are now formed of lotus flowers, or palm branches. In some cases, with a sad want of taste, the weight of the roof rests on the weak head of a woman (see Fig. 32). It was perhaps from this that the Greek sculptor took the design for his beautiful bust of the Lady in the Lotus now in the British Museum. The buildings, however, of the Ptolemies are such that, before the hieroglyphics on

them had been read by Dr. Young, nobody had ever guessed that they were later than the time of Cambyses, while three or four pillars at Alexandria were almost the only proof that the country had ever been held by Greeks.

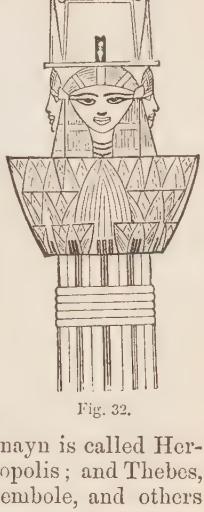


Fig. 32.

(64) In the religion we find many new gods or old gods in new dresses. Hapimou, the Nile, now pours water out of a jar like a Greek river god. The moon, which before ornamented the heads of gods, is now a goddess under the name of Ioh. The favourite Isis had appeared in so many characters that she is called the goddess with ten thousand names. The gods had also changed their rank; Pthah and Serapis now held the chief place. Strange change had also taken place in the names of men and cities. In the place of Pet-isis, Pet-amun, Psammo, and Serapion, we find men named Eudoxus, Hermophantus, and Polycrates; while of the cities, Oshmoonayn is called Hermopolis; Esne, Latopolis; Chemmis, Panopolis; and Thebes, Diospolis; and Ptolemais, Phylace, Parembole, and others had sprung into being. Many new characters crept into the hieroglyphics, as the camelopard, the mummy lying on a couch, the ships with sails, and the chariot with horses; there were more words spelled with letters, the groups were more crowded, and the titles of the kings within the ovals became much longer.

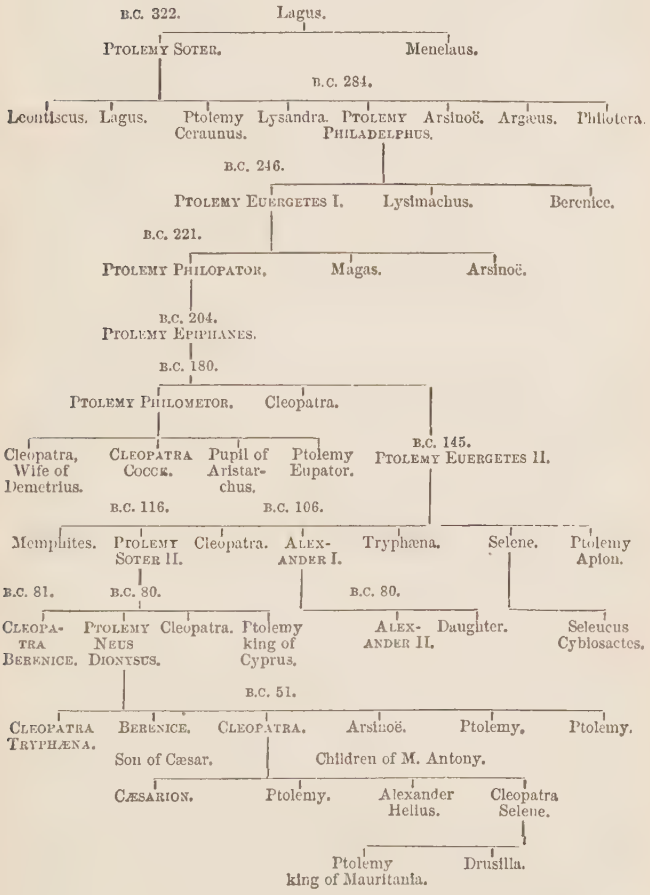
(65) With the papyrus, which was becoming common about the time of the Persian invasion, we find the running hand, the enchorial or common writing, as it was called, coming into use, in which there were few symbols, and most of the words were spelt with letters. Each letter was of the easy sloping form, which came from its being made with a reed or pen, instead of the stiff form of the hieroglyphics, which were mostly cut in stone. But there is a want of neatness, which has thrown a difficulty over them, and has made these writings less easy to read than the hieroglyphics. Least of all can we trace the change in the language, which

is only really known to us through the Bible, which was translated into Coptic, with Greek letters, about three centuries after the fall of the Ptolemies. The language of the old hieroglyphics seems to have been nearly the same as this, but the characters must be much better understood than they are before we can point out the changes in the language in which they were written.

(66) When the country fell into the hands of Octavianus, whom we shall henceforth call Augustus, the Copts were in a much lower state than when conquered by Alexander. Of the old moral worth and purity of manners very little remained. All respect for women was lost; and when men degrade those who should be their helps towards excellence, they degrade themselves also. Not a small part of the nation was sunk in vice. They had been slaves for three hundred years, sometimes trusted and well treated, but more often trampled on and ground down with taxes and cruelty. They had never held up their heads as freemen, or felt themselves lords of their own soil; they had fallen off in numbers, in wealth, and in knowledge; nothing was left to them but their religious ceremonies, their temples, their hieroglyphics, and the painful remembrance of their faded glories.

Fig. 33.—The god Horus between Isis and Nephthys.

FAMILY OF THE LAGIDÆ OR PTOLEMIES.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE ROMAN EMPERORS OF THE JULIAN AND CLAUDIAN FAMILIES. B.C. 30—A.D. 68.

(1) Octavianus, now called Augustus (see Fig. 34), began his reign in Egypt by ordering all the statues of Antony, of which there were more than fifty ornamenting the various public buildings of the city, to be broken to pieces; and he had the meanness to receive a bribe of one thousand talents from Archibius, a friend of Cleopatra, that the queen's statues might be left standing. As he had only just raised himself above his equals, he might well be careful in the choice of the friends to whom he entrusted the command of the provinces; and it seems to have been part of his king-craft to give the offices of greatest trust to men of low birth, who, like Mæcenas, the prefect of Rome, might be flattered with being called "the ornament of the equestrian rank," but who were at the same time well aware that they owed their employments to their seeming want of ambition. Thus the government of Egypt, the greatest and richest of the provinces, was given to Cornelius Gallus, a man of very little note or talent. Gallus was the friend of Virgil, and himself a poet; he is, however, better known in Virgil's tenth eclogue than in the command of his province or in his own Greek epigrams.

Plutarch. Vit. Anton. B.C. 30.

Fig. 34.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Anthologia Græca, iv. 8.

(2) Before the fall of the republic the senate had given the command of the provinces to members of their own body only; and therefore Augustus, not wishing to alter the law, obtained from the senate for himself Egypt and all those governments which he meant to give to men of lower rank. By this legal fiction, these equestrian prefects were answerable for their conduct

Tacitus, Annal. lib. xii.

to nobody but the emperor on a petition, and they could not be sued at law before the senate for their misdeeds. But he made an exception in the case of Egypt. While on the one hand in that province he gave to the prefect's edicts the force of law, on the other he allowed him to be cited before the senate, though appointed by himself. This was a wise and well-meant regulation; but as the republic was sinking fast into a despotism it soon became useless. The power thus given to the senate they never ventured to use, and the prefect of Egypt was never punished or removed but by the emperor. Under the prefect was the chief justice of the province, who heard, himself or by deputy, all causes except those which were reserved for the decision of the emperor in person. These last were decided by a second judge, or in modern language, a chancellor, as they were too numerous and too trifling to be taken to Rome. Under these judges were numerous freedmen of the emperor, and clerks entrusted with affairs of greater and less weight. Of the native magistrates the chief were the keeper of the records, the police judge, the prefect of the night, and the *Exegetes*, or interpreter of the Egyptian law, who was allowed to wear a purple robe like a Roman magistrate. But these Egyptian magistrates were never treated as citizens; they were barbarians, little better than slaves, and only raised to the rank of the emperor's freedmen.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

(3) Augustus showed not a little jealousy in the rest of the laws by which his new province was to be governed. While other conquered cities usually had a senate or municipal form of government granted to them by the Romans, no city in unhappy Egypt was allowed that privilege, which, by teaching the citizens the art of governing themselves and the advantages of union, might have made them less at the mercy of their masters. He not only gave the command of the kingdom to a man below the rank of a senator, but ordered that no senator should even be allowed to set foot in Egypt without leave from himself; and centuries later, when the weakness of the country had led the emperors to soften some of the other stern laws of Augustus, this was still strictly enforced. It was before this law was passed, and while Augustus was himself in Alexandria, that the poet Tibullus,

Dion Cassius, lib. li.

Tibull. lib. i. 7.

travelling with his consular friend Massala, made a hasty visit to Memphis, and learned the city's grief for the death of the bull Apis, and that the Nile began to rise when the Dog-star rose with the sun.

(4) Among other changes then brought into Egypt by the Romans was the use of a fixed year in all civil reckonings. The Egyptians, for all the common purposes of life, called the day of the heliacal rising of the Dog-star, about our 18th of July, their new-year's day, and the husbandman marked it with religious ceremonies as the time when the Nile began to overflow; while for all civil purposes, and dates of kings' reigns, they used a year of three hundred and sixty-five days, which of course had a moveable new-year's day. But by the orders of Augustus all public deeds were henceforth dated by the new civil year of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, which was named, after Julius Cæsar, the Julian year. The civil years were henceforth made to begin on the 29th of August, the day on which the moveable new-year's day then happened to fall, and were numbered from the year following the last of Cleopatra, as from the first year of the reign of Augustus. But notwithstanding the many advantages of the Julian year, which was used throughout Europe for sixteen centuries, till its faultiness was pointed out by Pope Gregory XIII., the Egyptian astronomers and mathematicians distrusted it from the first, and chose to stick to their old year, in which there could be no mistake about its length. Thus there were at the same time three years and three new-year's days in use in Egypt; one about the 18th of July, used by the common people; one on the 29th of August, used by order of the emperor; and one moveable, used by the astronomers.

Porphyrius, De Antro.

B.C. 24.

Heraclius, ap. Dodwell.

Dion Cassius, lib. li. 6.

(5) The Romans for the most part had little taste for these scientific inquiries, and were too fond of war to examine with much care the countries which they conquered. Julius Cæsar had been one of the few who wished to enlarge our knowledge of Egypt and its wonders; and the poet Lucan well describes his love of learning and at the same time his love of fighting, when he makes him say, that he would even have left the civil war unfinished to search for the sources of the Nile, if he could have been sure

Phars. x. 191.

of finding them. He had ordered a survey to be taken of the whole of the Roman provinces, and the length of all the roads to be measured for the use of the tax-gatherers and of the army; and Augustus was now able to add Egypt to the survey. Polyclitus was employed on this southern portion of the empire; and, after thirty-two years from its beginning by Julius, the measurement of nearly the whole known world was finished and reported to the senate. Æthici Cosmographia.

(6) At Alexandria Augustus was visited by Herod, who hastened to beg of him those portions of his kingdom which Antony had given to Cleopatra. Augustus received him as a friend; gave him back the territory which Antony had taken from him; and added the province of Samaria and the free cities on the coast. He also gave to him the body of four hundred Gauls, who formed part of the Egyptian army and had been Cleopatra's body-guard. He thus removed from Alexandria the last remains of the Gallic mercenaries, of whom the Ptolemies had usually had a troop in their service. Josephus, Antiq. xv. 7. Bell. Jud. i. 20, 3.

(7) Augustus visited the royal burial-place to see the body of Alexander, and devoutly added a golden crown and a garland of flowers to the other ornaments on the sarcophagus of the Macedonian. But he would take no pains to please either the Alexandrians or Egyptians; he despised them both. When asked if he would not like to see the Alexandrian monarchs lying in their mummy-cases in the same tomb, he answered: "No, I came to see the king, not dead men." His contempt for Cleopatra and her father made him forget the great qualities of Ptolemy Soter. So when he was at Memphis he refused to humour the national prejudice of two thousand years' standing by visiting the bull Apis. He would not imitate Alexander though he worshipped him. Of the former conquerors, Cambyses had stabbed the sacred bull, Alexander had sacrificed to it; had Augustus had the violent temper of either he would have copied Cambyses. The Egyptians always found the treatment of the sacred bull a foretaste of what they were themselves to receive from their sovereigns. Suetonius, in Vitâ.

(8) The Greeks of Alexandria, who had for some time

past very unwillingly yielded to the Jews the right of citizenship, now urged upon Augustus that it should no longer be granted. Augustus, however, had received great services from the Jews, and at once refused the prayer; and he set up in Alexandria an inscription, granting to the Jews the full privileges of Macedonians, which they claimed and had hitherto enjoyed under the Ptolemies. They were allowed their own magistrates and courts of justice, with the free exercise of their own religion; and soon afterwards, when their ethnarch or high priest died, they were allowed as usual to choose his successor. The Greek Jews of Alexandria were indeed very important, both from their numbers and their learning; they spread over Syria and Asia Minor; they had a synagogue in Jerusalem in common with the Jews of Cyrene and Libya; and we find that one of the chief teachers of Christianity after the apostles, in Ephesus, in Corinth, and in Crete, was Apollos, the learned Alexandrian.

Josephus, Antiq. xii. 3.

Contra Apion. ii.

Antiq. xix. 5.

Acts, vi. 9.

(9) On his return to Rome, Augustus carried with him the whole of the royal treasure; and though perhaps there might have been less gold and silver than usual in the palace of the Ptolemies, still it was so large a sum that when, upon the establishment of peace over all the world, the rate of interest upon loans fell in Rome, and the price of land rose, the change was thought to have been caused by the money from Alexandria. At the same time were carried away the valuable jewels, furniture, and ornaments, which had been handed down from father to son, with the crown of Upper and Lower Egypt. These were as usual drawn in waggons through the streets of Rome in triumph; and with them were shown in chains to the wondering crowd Alexander Helius and Cleopatra Selene, the children of Cleopatra and Antony, while for Cleopatra herself the conqueror was forced to be content with a statue, as voluntary death had saved the queen from that disgrace. The Romans were at the same time amused with the sight of crocodiles walking and swimming about in the theatre, guided and played with by some men from the city of Tentyra, whose citizens were always famous for their skill in catching

Suetonius, Vit. August. 41.

Dion Cassius, lib. li. 7.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

these dangerous animals, and who had been taken with them to Rome as their keepers (see Fig. 35).

(10) Augustus threatened a severe punishment to the Alexandrians in the building of a new capital. Only four miles from the Canobic or eastern gate of Alexandria he laid out the plan of his new city of Nicopolis, on the spot where he had routed Mark Antony's forces. Here he began several large temples, and removed to them the public sacrifices and the priesthood from the temples of Alexandria. But the work was carried no further, and soon abandoned; and the only change made by it in Alexandria was that the temple of Serapis and the other temples were for a short time deserted. Could anything mark more strongly the difference between the first Greek and the first Roman sovereign of Egypt! Alexander chose the site of his new city for its harbour, and its convenience for trade; Augustus chose his to mark the spot of the kingdom's overthrow. The first was meant to be a boon to the nation, and the second to be an insult; and we are therefore pleased to remark that Alexandria has added to the glory of its founder, while the Nicopolis of Augustus was at once seen to be a failure.

Fig. 35.

(11) The rest of the world had long been used to see their finest works of art carried away by their conquerors; and the Egyptians soon learned that if any of the monuments of which they were so justly proud were to be left to them, it would only be because they were too heavy to be moved by the Roman engineers. Beside a statue called a Janus, loaded with gold, which was placed in the temple of that god in Rome, a picture by Nicias of the youth named Hyacinthus, of which the skilful execution was such that it was mentioned among the spoils of a kingdom, and beside many other smaller Egyptian works, two of the large obelisks which even now ornament Rome were carried away by Augustus,

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 4.

Lib. xxxv. 40.

Lib. xxxvi. 14.

that of Thothmosis IV., which stands in the Piazza del Popolo, and that of Psammetichus on Monte Citorio. And the plundered Egyptians might have found some comfort in their fall by remarking that the Romans, in despair of equalling what they had seen, believed that they did enough for the grandeur of their own city in borrowing these monuments of Theban glory.

(12) Cornelius Gallus, the first prefect of Egypt, seems either to have misunderstood or soon forgotten the terms of his appointment. He was intoxicated with power; he set up statues of himself in the cities of Egypt, and, copying the kings of the country, he carved his name and deeds upon the pyramids. On this, Augustus recalled him, and he killed himself to avoid punishment.

Dion Cassius, lib. liii.

The emperor's wish to check the tyranny of the prefects and tax-gatherers was strongly marked in the case of the champion fighting-cock. The Alexandrians bred these birds with great care, and eagerly watched their battles in the theatre. A powerful cock that had hitherto slain all its rivals and always strutted over the table unconquered had gained a great name in the city; and this bird Eros, a tax-gatherer, roasted and ate. Augustus, on hearing of this insult to the people, sent for the man, and, on his owning what he had done, ordered him to be crucified. Three legions and nine cohorts were found force enough to keep this great kingdom in quiet obedience to their new masters; and when Heroopolis revolted, and afterwards when a rebellion broke out in the Thebaid against the Roman tax-gatherers, these risings were easily crushed. The spirit of the nation, both of the Greeks and Egyptians, seems to have been wholly broken; and Petronius, who succeeded Cornelius Gallus, found no difficulty in putting down a rising of the Alexandrians.

Plutarch. Apophtheg.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

(13) The canals, through which the overflowing waters of the Nile were carried to the more distant fields, were of course each year more or less blocked up by the same mud which made the fields fruitful; and the clearing of these canals was one of the greatest boons that the monarch could bestow upon the tillers of the soil. This had often been neglected by the less powerful and less prudent kings

of Egypt, in whose reigns the husbandman believed that Heaven in its displeasure withheld part of the wished-for overflow; but Petronius employed the leisure of his soldiers on this wise and benevolent work; and it was then found that a rise of twelve cubits in the waters of the Nile at Memphis overflowed as wide a tract of country as fourteen did before the prefect Petronius cleared the canals. In order better to understand the rise of the Nile, to fix the amount of the land-tax, and more fairly to regulate the overflow through the canals, the Nilometer on the island of Elephantine was at this time made (see Fig. 36). It is a flight of stone steps which runs down into the river, and on the wall by the side is a cut scale to measure the rise of the water. On this wall the record of the river's rise still remains for the years between Augustus and Severus. The greatest rise marked is of twenty-five cubits and four hand-breadths; and the lowest is of twenty-one cubits and three hand-breadths. The cubit is not the ordinary one of six hand-breadths, but the royal cubit, containing an ordinary cubit and a hand-breadth over, and it is here divided into fourteen parts, each part being half a hand-breadth.

Suetonius, Vit. Aug. 18.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4863.

Fig. 36.

(14) It was under Ælius Gallus, the third prefect, that Egypt was visited by Strabo, the most careful and judicious of all the ancient travellers. He had come to study mathematics, astronomy, and geography, in the Museum under the successors of Euclid, Eratosthenes, and Hipparchus. He accompanied the prefect in a march to Syene, the border town, and he has

left us a most valuable account of the state of the country at that time. Alexandria was the chief object that engaged his attention (see Fig. 37). Its two harbours held more ships than were to be seen in any other port in the world, and its export trade was thought greater than that of all Italy. The

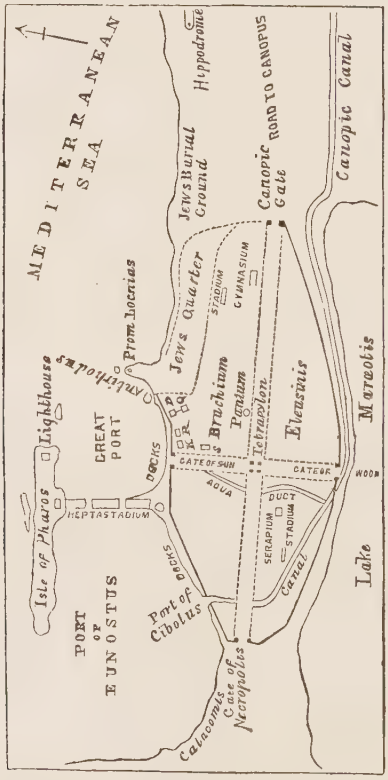


Fig. 37.—Plan of Alexandria.

docks on each side of the causeway, and the ship-canal from the harbour of Eunostus to the Mareotic lake, were full of bustle and activity. The palace or citadel on the promontory of Lochias, on one side of the great harbour, was as

striking an object as the lighthouse on the other. The temples and palaces covered a space of ground equal to more than one fourth part of the city, and the suburbs reached even beyond the Mareotic lake. Among the chief buildings were the Sema, which held the bodies of Alexander and of the Ptolemies; the court of justice; the Museum of philosophy, which had been rebuilt since the burning by Cæsar's soldiers; the Exchange, crowded with merchants; the temple of Neptune; and Mark Antony's fortress, called the Timonium, on a point of land which jutted into the harbour; the Cæsarium, or new palace; and the great temple of Serapis, which was on the western side of the city, and was the largest and most ornamented of all these buildings. Further off was the beautiful Gymnasium for wrestlers and boxers, with its porticoes of a stadium in length, where the citizens used to meet in public assembly. From the top of the temple of Pan, which rose like a sugar-loaf in the middle of the city, and was mounted by a winding staircase, the whole of this remarkable capital might be seen spread out before the eye. On the east of the city was the circus or Hippodrome for chariot-races, and on the west lay the public gardens and pale green palm-groves, and the Necropolis ornamenting the roadside with tombs for miles along the sea-shore. Other tombs were in the catacombs underground on the same side

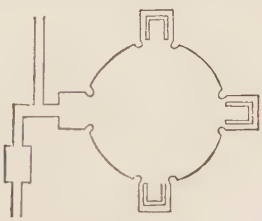


Fig. 38.

of the city (see Plan, Fig. 38, and Interior, Fig. 39). The banks of the Marcotic lake were fringed with vineyards, which bore the famed wine of the same name, and which formed a pleasant contrast with the burning whiteness of the desert beyond. The canal from the lake to the Nile marked

its course through the plain by the greater freshness of the green along its banks. In the distance were the new buildings of Augustus's city of Nicopolis. The arts of Greece and the wealth of Egypt had united to adorn the capital of the Ptolemies. Heliopolis, the ancient seat of Egyptian learning, had never been wholly repaired since its siege by Cambyses, and was then almost a deserted city.

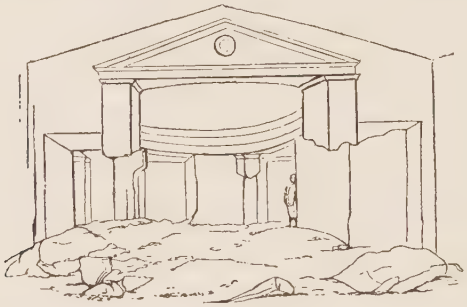


Fig. 39.

Its schools were empty, its teachers silent; but the houses in which Plato and his friend Eudoxus were said to have dwelt and studied were pointed out to the traveller, to warm his love of knowledge and encourage him in the pursuit of virtue. Memphis was the second city in Egypt, while Thebes and Abydos, the former capitals, had fallen to the size and rank of villages. At Memphis Strabo saw the bull-fights in the circus, and was allowed to look at the bull Apis through a window of his stable. At Crocodilopolis he saw the sacred crocodile caught on the banks of the lake and fed with cakes and wine. Ptolemais, which was at first only an encampment of Greek soldiers, had risen under the sovereigns to whom it owed its name to be the largest city in the Thebaid, and scarcely less than Memphis. It was built wholly by the Greeks, and, like Alexandria, it was under Greek laws, while the other cities in Egypt were under Egyptian laws and magistrates. It was situated between Panopolis and Abydos; but, while the temples of Thebes, which were built so many centuries earlier, are still standing

in awful grandeur, scarcely a trace of this Greek city can be found in the villages of Mensheeh and Geergeh, which now stand on the spot. Strabo and the Roman generals did not forget to visit the broken colossal statue of Amunothph, near Thebes, which sent forth its musical sounds every morning, as the sun, rising over the Arabian hills, first shone upon its face; but this inquiring traveller could not make up his mind whether the music came from the statue, or the base, or the people around it. He ended his tour with watching the sunshine at the bottom of the astronomical well at Syene; which on the longest day is exactly under the sun's northern edge, and with admiring the skill of the boatmen who shot down the cataracts in their wicker boats for the amusement of the Roman generals. Syene was the last of the Egyptian towns. The next place, the island of Philæ, was inhabited by a mixed population, half Egyptian and half Ethiopian. Strabo, lib. ii.

(15) The prefect Ælius Gallus spent two years on an unsuccessful inroad into Arabia Felix, led there by the reports of the boundless wealth which was to be found in the Arab fastnesses. Much of the trade of Arabia was carried on by the Arabs receiving gold and silver in exchange for the spices and other costly and portable articles of the East; and the Romans, who had little knowledge of where those products were brought from, seem to have thought that at least a part of the precious metals which they saw flowing eastward through Arabia would be found in hoards in its cities. Gallus took with him ten thousand men, including five hundred Jews and a thousand Arabs; and, leaving his ships of war, he had a hundred and thirty ships of burden built to accompany him. With these he coasted the eastern side of the Red Sea towards Arabia Felix; he landed at Leuce Come, in latitude 25°, and marched inwards towards the incense country. He could find, however, few enemies and no treasures. The legions were beaten by the want of water and by the other difficulties of the desert, rather than by the Arab forces, and they were at last called back by the news of an Ethiopian invasion. Gallus rejoined his ships at Nera Come, in latitude 24°, and returned after a voyage of eleven days to Myos Hormos in Egypt. Lib. xvi.

(16) In the earlier periods of Egyptian history we have

seen Ethiopia peopled or at least governed by a race of men, whom, as they spoke the same language and worshipped the same gods as their neighbours of Upper Egypt, we must call Copts. But the Arabs, under the name of Troglodytæ, and other tribes, had made an early settlement on the African side of the Red Sea. So numerous were they in Upper Egypt that in the time of Strabo half the population of the city of Coptos were Arabs; they were the camel-drivers and carriers for the Theban merchants in the trade across the desert. Some of the conquests of Rameses had been over that nation in Southern Ethiopia, and the Arab power must have further risen after the defeat of the Ethiopians by Euergetes I. At any rate, as we learn from the history of Africa by the younger Juba, Ethiopia in the time of Augustus was held by Arabs; a race who thought peace a state of disgraceful idleness, and war the only employment worthy of men; and who made frequent hasty inroads into Nubia, and sometimes into Egypt. The faces of their chiefs, like the statues of their gods, were smeared with vermilion. They fought for plunder, not for conquest, and usually retreated as quickly as they came, with such booty as they laid their hands on. To use words which were proverbial while the Nile swarmed with crocodiles, "they did as the dogs do, they drank and ran away;" and the Romans found it necessary to place a body of troops near the cataracts of Syene to stop their marching northward and laying waste the Thebaid. However, while the larger part of the Roman legions was now withdrawn into Arabia, a body of thirty thousand of these men, whom we may call either Arabs, from their blood and language, or Ethiopians, from their country, marched northward into Egypt, and overpowered the three Roman cohorts at Elephantine, Syene, and Philæ. But they were badly armed and badly trained, some carrying large shields of skins, many with no better weapon than a club, while others had axes, and some few swords. They were led on by the generals of Candace, a woman of masculine mind, who had lost one eye, queen of Napata, at the fourth cataract, and of Meroë, beyond the first fork in the river. They were, however, easily driven

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Pliny, lib. vi. 34.

Lib. xxxiii. 36.

Macrobius, Saturn. ii. 2.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

back when Gallus led against them an army of ten thousand men, and drove them to Ethiopian Pselchis, probably Abou-Simbel. There he defeated them again, and took the city by storm. From Pselchis he marched across the Nubian desert two hundred and fifty miles to Premnis, on the northerly bend of the river, and then made himself master of Napata, the capital. A guard was at the moment left in the country to check any future inroads; but the Romans made no attempts to hold it. Their territory in that direction ended at Hiera Sycaminon, seventy miles, or twelve schœni, beyond Syene; and that province bore the name of the Dodecaschœnos. But that the influence of Roman art was not lost on the architecture of the country is even shown by the arches in the temple at Naga in Meroë, upwards of one thousand miles from Alexandria. Caillaud's Travels.

(17) Of the state of the Ethiopic Arabs under Queen Candace we learn but little from this hasty inroad; but some of the tribes must have been very far from the barbarians that, from their ignorance of the arts of war, the Romans judged them to be. Those nearest to the Egyptian frontiers, the Troglodytæ and Blemmyes, were unsettled, wandering, and plundering; but the inhabitants of Napata and Meroë were of a more civilised race. Candace's name (Fig. 40) is there sculptured on the temples in Egyptian hieroglyphics, though such characters seem to have been used chiefly as an ornament to the buildings, and not because they could be understood. The small temple at Naga in which the architecture is as much Roman as Egyptian, was probably built by this queen. It is on the plan, and in part a copy from the smaller temple on the island of Philæ. The capitals of the columns are formed of palm-leaves; and in the walls between the columns are windows having arched tops (see Fig. 41). This temple can only have been built by a Roman architect, who had studied in Egypt, and had since entered the service of the Ethiopians. Beyond Meroë we find no further traces of the influence of Egyptian civilisation. The hill country very much separated Ethiopia and Meroë from Abyssinia or Southern Ethiopia, a country of which the chief cities were on the coast. The Jews had there settled in large numbers and for a long time; Solomon's trade had carried them to

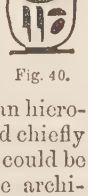


Fig. 40.

Adule and Auxum; thence they may have reached Meroë. Some of them were there employed in the highest offices, and must have brought with them the arts of civilised life. A few years later we meet with a Jewish eunuch, the treasurer of Queen Candace, travelling with some pomp from Ethiopia to the religious

Acts, viii. 27.

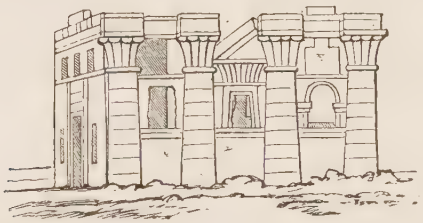


Fig. 41.

festival at Jerusalem, probably to present offerings to the temple on behalf of those of his countrymen who were unable to travel so far. The religion of Ethiopia under these Arabs was no longer Coptic, but, like the language, was an offset of the Jewish, and most likely nearly the same as what we find it, when, being reduced to writing in the Koran, six centuries later, it took the name of Mahomedanism.

(18) The Egyptian coins of Augustus and his successors are all Greek; the conquest of the country by the Romans made no change in its language. Though the chief part of the population spoke Coptic, it was still a Greek province of the Roman empire; the decrees of the prefects of Alexandria and of the upper provinces were written in Greek; and every Roman traveller, who like a schoolboy has scratched his name upon the foot of the musical statue of Amunothph, to let the world know the extent of his travels, has helped to prove that the Roman government of the country was carried on in the Greek language. The coins often bear the eagle and thunderbolt on one side, while on the other is the emperor's head with his name and titles; and after a few years they are all dated with the year of the emperor's reign. In the

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

earliest he is styled a Son of God, in imitation of the Egyptian title of Son of the Sun (see Fig. 42). After Egypt lost its liberty we no longer find any gold coinage in the country; that metal, with everything else that was most costly, was carried away to pay the Roman tribute. This was chiefly taken in money, except

Mionnet, Med. Antiq.

Fig. 42.

indeed the tax on corn, which the Egyptian kings had always received in kind, and which was still gathered in the same way, and each year shipped to Rome to be distributed among the idle poor of that great city. At this time it amounted to twenty millions of bushels, which was four times what was levied in the reign of Philadelphus. The trade to the east was increasing, but as yet not large. About one hundred and twenty small vessels sailed every year to India from Myos Hormos, which was now the chief port on the Red Sea.

A. Victor, Epitome.

Strabo, lib. ii.

(19) No change was made in the Egyptian religion by this change of masters; and, though the means of the priests were lessened, they still carried forward the buildings which were in progress, and even began new ones. The small temple of Isis at Tentyra, behind the great temple of Athor, was either built or finished in this reign, and it was dedicated to the goddess, and to the honour of the emperor as Jupiter Liberator, in a Greek inscription on the cornice, in the thirty-first year of the reign, when Publius Octavius was prefect of the province. The large temple at Talmis, now called Kalabshe, in Nubia, was also then built, though not wholly finished, and dedicated to the sun under the name of the god Manduli, or Maluli, perhaps the same god as Mandoo-Ra of Hermonthis; and we find the name of Augustus at Philæ, on some of the additions to the temple of Isis, which had been built in the reign of Philadelphus.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

In the hieroglyphical inscriptions on these temples Augustus is called Autocrator Cæsar, and is styled Son of the Sun, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, with the other titles which had always been given by the priests to the Ptolemies and their own native sovereigns for so many centuries. Thus the historians of Rome, who are almost deceived by the modest behaviour of Augustus, and are in doubt whether he was sincere in begging the senate every tenth year to allow him to lay aside the weight of empire, may have those doubts cleared up in Egypt; for there he had assumed the style and title of king within ten years of the death of Cleopatra.

(20) The Greeks had at all times been forward in owning the Egyptians as their teachers in religion; and in the dog Cerberus, the judge Minos, the boat of Charon, and the River Styx of their mythology, we see a clear proof that it was in Egypt that the Greeks gained their faint glimpse of the immortality of the soul, a day of judgment, and a future state of rewards and punishments; and now that Rome was in close intercourse with Egypt, the Romans were equally ready to borrow thence their religious ceremonies. They brought to Rome the Egyptian opinions with the statues of the gods. They ran into the new superstition to avoid the painful uneasiness of believing nothing. Men who have no strong faith themselves are glad to listen to the words of those who have; and though the Romans ridiculed their own gods they believed in those of Egypt. So fashionable was the worship of Isis and Serapis becoming in Italy, that Augustus made a law that no Egyptian ceremonies should enter the city or even the suburbs of Rome. His subjects might copy the luxuries, the follies, and the vices of the Alexandrians, but not the gloomy devotion of the Egyptians. But the spread of opinions was not so checked; even Virgil, the court poet, taught the Egyptian millennium, or the resurrection from the dead when the thousand years were ended; and the cripple asking for alms in the streets of Rome would beg in the name of the holy Osiris.

Dion Cassius, lib. liii.

Æneid. vi. 748.

Horace, Epist. i. 17.

(21) During this reign lived Sotion of Alexandria, under whom the philosopher Seneca studied when young, from

whom he gained his habits of stoical abstinence, and of whom he speaks in his works with affectionate remembrance. Sotion taught the Pythagorean doctrines of abstinence from animal food, on the ground that animals have souls, and that, as nothing that has been created ever dies, most likely the souls of men, when they quit their own bodies, remove into the bodies of animals. His work was an agreeable miscellany, and he named it The Cornucopia or Horn of Amalthæa. Archibius edited the Hymns of Callimachus, and his son Apollonius has left a Dictionary to Homer. Tryphon, the son of Ammonius, lived about the same time in Alexandria. He was a poet and a grammarian; he wrote on the dialects of the Greek poets, on grammar, and on spelling. Another grammarian of Alexandria was Aristonicus, who wrote on Hesiod's Theogony, on the proper names in Homer, and on the wanderings of Menelaus. But these writers lessened for themselves the chief sources of lofty thoughts and warm feelings. By living as a class apart from the world's business, from families and children, their writings lost in earnestness, in enthusiasm, and in delicacy of taste; by living sometimes on the Egyptian coast of the Mediterranean, sometimes on the European coast, and sometimes on the Asiatic coast, they weakened their love of country and of kindred; and, while every place had its own gods, the traveller often dropped his religion when he left his home.

Seneca, Epist. 49, 108.

A. Gellius, lib. i. 8.

Suidas.

Strabo lib. i.

(22) Egypt felt no change on the death of Augustus; the province was well governed during the whole of the reign of TIBERIUS (see Fig. 43), and the Alexandrians completed the beautiful temple to his honour, named the Sebaste, or Cæsar's temple. It stood by the side of the harbour, and was surrounded with a sacred grove. It was ornamented with porticoes, and fitted up with libraries, paintings, and statues, and was the most lofty building in the city. In front of this temple they set up two ancient obelisks, which had been made by Thoth-

Fig. 43.

Philo, Legat. cap. ix. A.D. 14.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 14.

mosis III., and carved by Rameses II., and which, like the other monuments of the Theban kings, have outlived all the temples and palaces of their Greek and Roman successors. One of these obelisks has fallen to the ground, but the other is still standing, and bears the name of Cleopatra's needle. In front of this temple was also placed a marble sun-dial, made as if Eratosthenes and Hipparchus had never taught the world that the gnomon which throws the shadow ought to be in the line of the earth's pole. By this dial the time between sunrise and sunset was divided into twelve hours, equal among themselves, but not equal from one day to another. Thus they continued as of old, in summer as in winter, whether the days were longer or shorter, to count twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of night (see Fig. 44).

Burton's Excerpt. 51, 52.

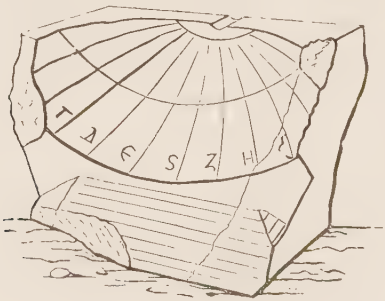


Fig. 44.

(23) The harsh justice with which the emperor began his reign was at Rome soon changed into a cruel tyranny; but in the provinces it was only felt as a check to the injustice of the prefects. On one occasion, when Æmilius Rectus sent home from Egypt a larger amount of taxes than was usual, he hoped that his zeal would be praised by Tiberius. But the emperor's message to the prefect was as stern as it was humane; "I should wish my sheep to be sheared, but not to be flayed." On the death of one of the prefects, there was found among his property at Rome a statue or portrait of

Dion Cassius, lib. lvii.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 67.

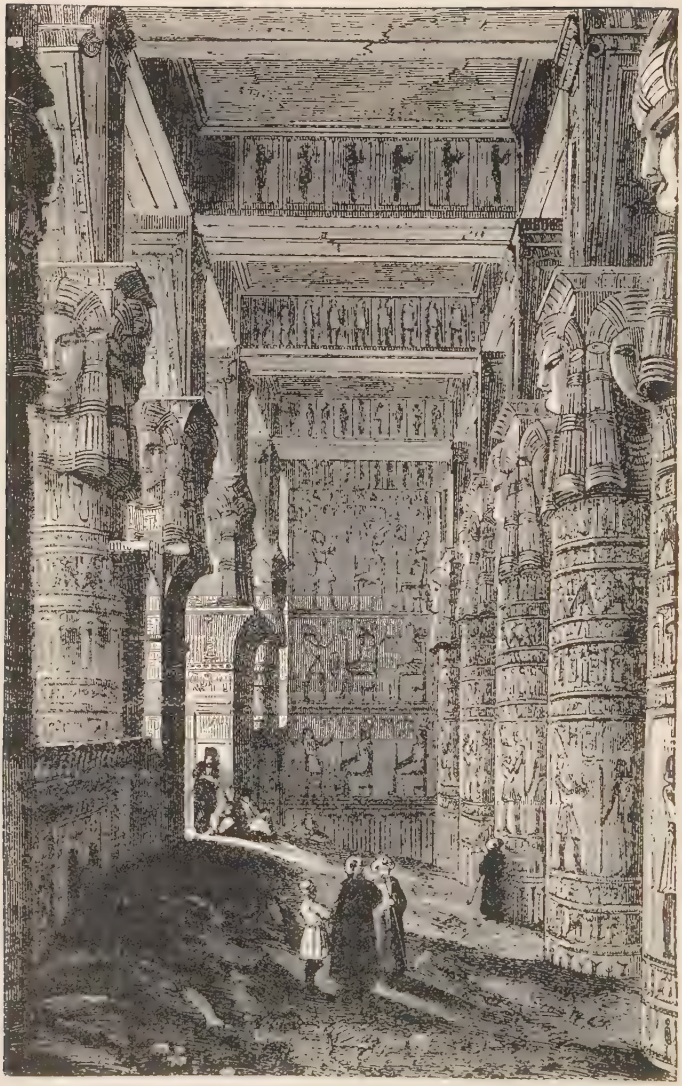


Fig. 46.—View in the Temple of Tentyra.

Menelaus, carved in Ethiopian obsidian, or in black glass in imitation of obsidian. It had been used in the religious ceremonies in the temple of Heliopolis, and Tiberius returned it to the priests of that city as its rightful owners. Another proof of the equal justice with which this province was governed was to be seen in the buildings then carried on by the priests in Upper Egypt. We find the name of Tiberius carved in hieroglyphics on additions or repairs made to the temples at Thebes, at Aphroditopolis, at Berenice on the Red Sea, at Philæ, and at the Greek city of Parembole in Nubia. The great portico was at this time added to the temple at Tentyra, with an inscription dedicating it to the goddess in Greek and in hieroglyphics (see Elevation, Fig. 45; Interior, Fig. 46). Wilkinson, Thebes.

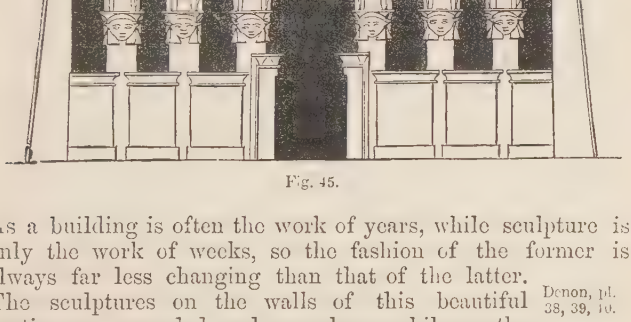


Fig. 45.

As a building is often the work of years, while sculpture is only the work of weeks, so the fashion of the former is always far less changing than that of the latter. The sculptures on the walls of this beautiful portico are crowded and graceless; while, on the other hand, the building itself has the same grand simplicity and massive strength that we admire in the older temples of Upper Egypt. On the ceiling of the portico is a curious zodiac. In one line are thirty-six men or women standing in boats, thus dividing the heavens into thirty-six decans or portions of ten degrees each, which, as they rose heliacally, divided the year into thirty-six portions; this was the Egyptian zodiac. In another line are the twelve signs through which the sun moves, which seem to have been Denon, pl. 38, 39, 40.

brought from Babylon rather than to be of Egyptian growth. This well-known sculpture our antiquaries once thought was of a great antiquity; but the sign of the Scales might alone have taught them that it could not be older than the reign of Augustus, who gave that name to the group of stars which before formed the spreading claws of the Scorpion. We cannot but admire the zeal of the Egyptians by whom this work was then finished. They were treated as slaves by their Greek fellow-countrymen; their houses were ransacked every third year by military authority in search of arms; they could have had no help from their Roman masters, who only drained the province of its wealth; and the temple had perhaps never been heard of by the emperor, who could have been little aware that the most lasting monument of his reign was being raised in the distant province of Egypt. The priests of the other parts of the country sent gifts out of their poverty in aid of this pious work; and among the figures on the walls we see those of forty cities, from Samneh at the second cataract to Memphis and Sais in the Delta, each presenting an offering to the god of the temple. We often find that what is a luxury in one nation or at one time is thought a necessary in another; and we must admire a people who, while denying themselves all beyond the coarsest food and clothing, as luxuries, thought a noble massive temple for the worship of their gods one of the first necessaries of life. The square low body of the temple is almost hid behind a portico, which is wider and loftier than the rest, and is itself nearly one-half of the building, and which shows a front of six thick columns, each having four heads of a woman for its capital. Over many of the columns is the figure of the pigmy Pthah as a large-headed dwarf, the god of Memphis (see Fig. 47). All the massive walls of the temple slope a little inwards, which adds both to the strength and to the appearance of it. They are covered with hieroglyphics, but are otherwise plain, without window, niche, or any orna-

Philo, in Flaccum.

Harris's Standards.

Denon, pl. 38. 39. 40.

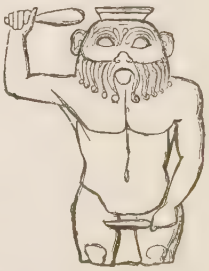


Fig. 47.

ment but the deep overshadowing eaves of the roof. On entering the portico, you see that its ceiling is upheld by twenty-four columns, in four rows of six each; you thence enter the body of the temple, through a doorway, into the chief room, where there are six more columns, and, passing straight forward through two other rooms, you reach the fourth and last, leaving several smaller rooms on each side. The larger temples of Thebes were in most part open to the sky; but this seems to have been wholly roofed, except the middle of the chief room. Every part is small after the spacious portico; and the whole seems planned as much for strength as for beauty, as much for a castle as for a temple. In front of the portico there may have been once a walled courtyard; but its massive doorway is the only part which is now standing.

(24) In the third year of this reign Germanicus Cæsar, who, much against his will, had been sent into the East as governor, found time to leave his own province, and to snatch a hasty view of the time-honoured buildings of Egypt. He went up as high as Thebes, and, while gazing on the huge remains of the temples, he asked the priests to read to him the hieroglyphical writing on the walls. He was told that it recounted the greatness of the country in the time of King Rameses, when there were seven hundred thousand Egyptians of an age to bear arms; and that, with these troops, Rameses had conquered the Libyans, Ethiopians, Medes, Persians, Bactrians, Scythians, Syrians, Armenians, Cappadocians, Bithynians, and Lycians. He was also told the tributes laid upon each of those nations; the weight of gold and silver, the number of chariots and horses, the gifts of ivory and scents for the temples, and the quantity of corn which the conquered provinces sent to feed the population of Thebes. After listening to the musical statue of Amunothph, Germanicus went on to Elephantine and Syene; and on his return he turned aside to the pyramids and the Lake of Mœris, which regulated the overflow of the Nile on the neighbouring fields. At Memphis, Germanicus consulted the sacred bull Apis as to his future fortune, and met with an unfavourable answer. The manner of consulting Apis was for the visitor to hold out some food in his hand; and the answer was understood

Tacitus, Ann. ii. A.D. 16.

Pliny, lib. viii. 71.

to be favourable if the bull turned his head to eat, but unfavourable if he looked another way. When Germanicus accordingly held out a handful of corn, the well-fed animal turned his head sullenly towards the other side of his stall; and on the death of this young prince, which shortly followed, the Egyptians did not forget to praise the bull's foresight. This blameless and seemingly praiseworthy visit of Germanicus did not, however, escape the notice of the jealous Tiberius. He had been guilty of gaining the love of the people by walking about without guards, in a plain Greek dress, and of lowering the price of corn in a famine by opening the public granaries; and Tiberius sternly reproached him with breaking the known law of Augustus, by which no Roman citizen of consular or even of equestrian rank might enter Alexandria without leave from the emperor.

(25) There were at this time about a million of Jews in Egypt. In Alexandria they seem to have been about one-third of the population, as they formed the majority in two wards out of the five into which the city was divided, and which two were called the Jews' wards. They lived under their own elders and Sanhedrim, going up at their solemn feasts to worship in their own temple at Onion; but from their mixing with the Greeks they had become less strict than their Hebrew brethren in their observance of the traditions. Some few of them, however, held themselves in obedience to the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, and looked upon the temple of Jerusalem as the only Jewish temple; and these men were in the habit of sending an embassy on the stated solemn feasts of the nation to offer the appointed sacrifices and prayers to Jehovah in the holy city on their behalf. But though the decree by Cæsar which declared that the Jews were Alexandrian citizens, was engraved on a pillar in the city, yet they were by no means treated as such, either by the government, or by the Greeks, or by the Egyptians. When, during the famine, the public granaries seemed unable to supply the whole city with food, even the humane Germanicus ordered that the Jews, like the Egyptians, should have no share of the gift. They were despised even by the Egyptians themselves, who, to insult them, said that the wicked

Philo, in Flaccum.

Philo, fragment. tom. ii. 646.

Josephus, in Apion. ii.

Plutarch. De Iside.

god Typhon had two sons, Hierosolymus and Judæus, and that from these the Jews were descended.

(26) In the neighbourhood of Alexandria, on a hill near the shores of the Lake Mareotis, was a little colony of Jews, who joining their own religion with the mystical opinions and gloomy habits of the Egyptians, have left us one of the earliest known examples of the monastic life. They bore the name of Therapeutæ. They had left, says the historian Philo, their worldly wealth to their families or friends; they had forsaken wives, children, brethren, parents, and the society of men, to bury themselves in solitude, and pass their lives in the contemplation of the divine essence. Seized by this heavenly love they were eager to enter upon the next world as though they were already dead to this. Every one, whether man or woman, lived alone in his cell, caring for neither food nor raiment, but having his thoughts wholly turned to the Law and the Prophets, or to sacred hymns of their own composing. They had God always in their thoughts, and even the broken sentences which they uttered in their dreams were treasures of religious wisdom. They prayed every morning at sunrise, and then spent the day in turning over the sacred volumes, and the commentaries which explained the allegories, or pointed out a secondary meaning as hidden beneath the surface of even the historical books of the Old Testament. At sunset they again prayed, and then tasted their first and only meal. Self-denial indeed was the foundation of all their virtues. Some made only three meals in the week, that their meditations might be more free; while others even attempted to prolong their fast to the sixth day. During six days of the week they saw nobody, not even one another. On the seventh day they met together in synagogue. Here they sat, each according to his age; the women separated from the men. Each wore a plain modest robe, which covered the arms and hands, and they sat in silence while one of the elders preached. As they studied the mystic powers of numbers they thought the number seven was a holy number, and that seven times seven made a great week, and hence they kept the fiftieth day as a solemn festival. On that day they dined together, the men lying on one side and the women on the other. The rushy papyrus

Philo, De vitâ contempl.

formed the couches; bread was their only meat, water their drink, salt the seasoning, and cresses the delicacy. They would keep no slaves, saying that all men were born equal. Nobody spoke, unless it was to propose a question out of the Old Testament, or to answer the question of another. The feast ended with a hymn to the praise of God, which they sang, sometimes in full chorus, and sometimes in alternate verses.

(27) We owe this beautiful picture of the contemplative life to the pen of the eloquent Philo, who, while painting the virtues of the Therapeutæ in such glowing colours, has told us nothing of their history. To these men the world may have owed many manuscript copies of the Old Testament; and the Greek translation called the Septuagint has been thought to have been made by their predecessors in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

(28) The ascetic Jews of Palestine, the Essenes on the banks of the Lake Asphaltites, by no means, according to Philo, thus quitted the active duties of life; and it would seem that the Therapeutæ rather borrowed their customs from the country in which they had settled than from any sects of the Jewish nation. Some classes of the Egyptian priesthood had always held the same views of their religious duties. These Egyptian monks slept on a hard bed of palm branches, with a still harder wooden pillow for the head; they were plain in their dress, slow in walking, spare in diet, and scarcely allowed themselves to smile. They washed thrice a day, and prayed as often; at sunrise, at noon, and at sunset. They often fasted from animal food, and at all times refused many meats as unclean. They passed their lives alone, either in study or wrapped in religious thought. They never met one another but at set times, and were seldom seen by strangers. Thus, leaving to others the pleasures, wealth, and lesser prizes of this life, they received from them in return, what most men value higher, namely, honour, fame, and power. And the same religious feeling which among the Egyptian Jews formed the sect of Therapeutæ afterwards among the Egyptian Christians gave birth to monks and nuns. The hard pillow on which these priests rested the head, sometimes made of wood and sometimes of

Pliny, lib. v. 15.

Chæremon, ap. Porphyr. de abst. iv.

stone, was used as the symbol of their hard way of living (see Fig. 48). We find numerous small models of it of all sizes buried with them in the tombs, together with the models of their gods, their mummies, and their beetles.

Fig. 48.

(29) The Romans, like the Greeks, feeling but little partiality in favour of their own gods, were rarely guilty of intolerance against those of others; and would hardly have checked the introduction of a new religion unless it made its followers worse citizens. But in Rome, where every act of its civil or military authorities was accompanied with a religious rite, any slight towards the gods was a slight towards the magistrate; many devout Romans had begun to keep holy the seventh day; and Egypt was now so closely joined to Italy that the Roman senate made a new law against the Egyptian and Jewish superstitions, and banished to Sardinia four thousand men who were found guilty of being Jews.

Horace, Serm. i. 9. 69.

Tacitus, Ann. ii. A.D. 19.

(30) Egypt had lost with its liberties its gold coinage, and it was now made to feel a further proof of being a conquered country in having its silver much alloyed with copper. But Tiberius, in the tenth year of his reign, altogether stopped the Alexandrian mint, as well as those of the other cities which occasionally coined; and after this year we find no more Egyptian coins, either in this or the next reign, but the few with the head and name of Augustus Cæsar, which seem hardly to have been meant for money, but to commemorate on some peculiar occasions the emperor's adoption by his step-father. We are left to guess at the reasons for this policy, but it was most likely an intention on the part of Tiberius to put down all the provincial mints of the empire, and to have no money coined but by his own authority. The Nubian gold mines were probably by this time wholly deserted; they had been so far worked out, as to be no longer profitable. For fifteen hundred years, ever since Ethiopia was conquered by Thebes, wages and prices had been higher in Egypt than in the neighbouring countries. But this was now no longer the case. Egypt had been getting poorer during the reigns of the latter Ptolemies;

Mionnet, Méd. antiq. A.D. 23.

and by this time it is probable that wages and prices were both higher in Rome.

(31) It seems to have been usual to change the prefect of Egypt every few years, and the prefect elect was often sent to Alexandria to wait till his predecessor's term of years had ended. Thus in this reign of twenty-three years Æmilius Rectus was succeeded by Vetrasius Pollio; and on his death Tiberius gave the government to his freedman Iberus. During the last five years Egypt was under the able but stern government of Flaccus Avillius, whose name is carved on the temple of Tentyra with that of the emperor. He was a man who united all those qualities of prudent forethought with prompt execution and attention to business, which was so necessary in controlling the irritable Alexandrians, who were liable to be fired into rebellion by the smallest spark. Justice was administered fairly; the great were not allowed to tyrannize over the poor, nor the people to meet in tumultuous mobs; and the legions were regularly paid, so that they had no excuse for plundering the unfortunate Egyptians.

Dion Cassius, lib. lvii.

Lib. lviii.

Philo, in Flaccum.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

(32) On the death of Tiberius the old quarrel again broke out between Jews and Greeks. The Alexandrians were not slow in learning the feelings of his successor CAIUS or CALIGULA (see Fig. 49) towards the Jews, nor in turning against them the new law that the emperor's statue should be worshipped in every temple of the empire. They had very unwillingly yielded a half obedience to the law of Augustus that the Jews should still be allowed the privileges of citizenship; and as soon as they heard that Caligula was to be worshipped as a god in every temple of the empire, they denounced the Jews as traitors and rebels, who refused so to honour the emperor in their synagogues. It happened unfortunately that their countryman, King Agrippa, at this time came to Alexandria. He had full leave from the emperor to touch there, as being the quickest and most

Philo, Legat.

A.D. 37.

Fig. 49.

Philo, in Flaccum.

certain way of making the voyage from Rome to the seat of his own government. Indeed the Alexandrian voyage had another merit in the eyes of a Jew; for whereas wooden water-vessels were declared by the Law to be unclean, an exception was made by their tradition in favour of the larger size of the water wells in the Alexandrian ships. Agrippa had seen Egypt before, on his way to Rome, and he meant to make no stay there; but though he landed purposely after dark, and with no pomp or show, he seems to have raised the anger of the prefect Flaccus, who felt jealous at any man of higher rank than himself coming into his province. The Greeks easily fell into the prefect's humour, and during Agrippa's stay in Alexandria they lampooned him in songs and ballads, of which the raillery was not of the most delicate kind. They mocked him by leading about the streets a poor idiot dressed up with a paper crown and a reed for a sceptre, in ridicule of his rather doubtful right to the style of royalty.

Mishna, De vasis.

Philo, in Flaccum, et Legat.

(33) As these insults towards the emperor's friend passed wholly unchecked by the prefect, the Greeks next assaulted the Jews in the streets and market-place, attacked their houses, rooted up the groves of trees round their synagogues, and tore down the decree by which the privileges of citizenship had been confirmed to them. The Greeks then proceeded to set up by force a statue of the emperor in each Jewish synagogue, as if the new decree had included those places of worship among the temples; and not finding statues enough they made use of the statues of the Ptolemies, which they carried away from the Gymnasium for that purpose. During the last reign, under the stern government of Tiberius, Flaccus had governed with justice and prudence, but under Caligula he seemed to have lost all judgment in his zeal against the Jews. When the riots in the streets could no longer be overlooked, instead of defending the injured party, he issued a decree in which he styled the Jews foreigners; thus at one word robbing them of their privileges and condemning them unheard. By this the Greeks were hurried forward into further acts of injustice and the Jews of resistance. But the Jews were the weaker party; they were overpowered and all

Philo, in Flaccum.

driven into one ward, and four hundred of their houses in the other wards were plundered, and the spoil divided as if taken in war. They were stoned and even burnt in the streets if they ventured forth to buy food for their families. Flaccus seized and scourged in the theatre thirty-eight of their venerable councillors, and to show them that they were no longer citizens the punishment was inflicted by the hands of Egyptian executioners. While the city was in this state of riot, the Greeks gave out that the Jews were concealing arms; and Flaccus, to give them a fresh proof that they had lost the rights of citizenship, ordered that their houses should be forcibly entered and searched by a centurion and a band of soldiers.

(34) During their troubles the Jews had not been allowed to complain to the emperor, or to send an embassy to Rome to make known their grievances. But the Jewish king Agrippa, who was on his way from Rome to his kingdom, forwarded to Caligula the complaints of his countrymen the Jews, with an account of the rebellious state of Alexandria. The riots, it is true, had been wholly raised by the prefect's zeal in setting up the emperor's statue in the synagogues to be worshipped by the Jews, and in carrying into effect the emperor's decree; but, as he had not been able to keep his province quiet, it was necessary that he should be recalled, and punished for his want of success. To have found it necessary to call out the troops was of course a fault in a governor; but doubly so at a time and in a province where a successful general might so easily become a formidable rebel. Accordingly a centurion, with a trusty cohort of soldiers, was sent from Rome for the recall of the prefect. On approaching the flat coast of Egypt, they kept the vessel in deep water till sunset, and then entered the harbour of Alexandria in the dark. The centurion on landing met with a freedman of the emperor, from whom he learned that the prefect was then at supper, entertaining a large company of friends. The freedman led the cohort quietly into the palace, into the very room where Flaccus was sitting at table; and the first tidings that he heard of his government being disapproved of in Rome was his finding himself a prisoner in his own palace. The friends stood motionless with surprise, the centurion produced the emperor's order

for what he was doing, and as no resistance was attempted all passed off quietly; Flaccus was hurried on board the vessel in the harbour on the same evening and immediately taken to Rome.

(35) It so happened that on the night that Flaccus was seized the Jews had met together to celebrate their autumnal feast, the Feast of the Tabernacles; not as on former years with joy and pomp, but in fear, in grief, and in prayer. Their chief men were in prison, their nation smarting under its wrongs and in daily fear of fresh cruelties; and it was not without alarm that they heard the noise of soldiers moving to and fro through the city, and the heavy tread of the guards marching by torchlight from the camp to the palace. But their fear was soon turned into joy when they heard that Flaccus, the author of all their wrongs, was already a prisoner on board the vessel in the harbour; and they gave glory to God, not, says Philo, that their enemy was going to be punished, but because their own sufferings were at an end.

(36) The Jews then, having had leave given them by the prefect, sent an embassy to Rome, at the head of which was Philo, the Platonic philosopher, who was to lay their grievances before the emperor, and to beg for redress. The Greeks also at the same time sent their embassy, at the head of which was the learned grammarian Apion, who was to accuse the Jews of not worshipping the statue of the emperor, and to argue that they had no right to the same privileges of citizenship with those who boasted of their Macedonian blood. But as the Jews did not deny the charge that was brought against them, Caligula would hear nothing that they had to say; and Philo withdrew with the beautiful remark, "Though the emperor is against us, God will be our friend."

Josephus, Antiq. lib. xviii. 8.

(37) We learn the sad tale of the Jews' suffering under Caligula from the pages of their own historian only. But though Philo may have felt and written as one of the sufferers, his truth is undoubted. He was a man of unblemished character, and the writer of greatest learning and of the greatest note at that time in Alexandria; being also of a great age, he well deserved the honour of being sent on the embassy to Caligula. He was in religion a Jew,

in his philosophy a Platonist, and by birth an Egyptian; and in his numerous writings we may trace the three sources from which he drew his opinions. He is always devotional and in earnest, full of pure and lofty thoughts, and often eloquent. His fondness for the mystical properties of numbers, and for finding an allegory or secondary meaning in the plainest narrative, seems borrowed from the Egyptians. According to the Eastern proverb every word in a wise book has seventy-two meanings; and this mode of interpretation was called into use by the necessity which the Jews felt of making the Old Testament speak a meaning more agreeable to their modern views of religion. Thus Philo says that Abraham's wife Sarah is Wisdom, while Hagar is Instruction, who after being banished is recalled by the Word in the form of an angel; and he elsewhere explains the Word to mean God's first-begotten son, by whom he governs the world as a shepherd does his flock. In Philo's speculative theology he seems to have borrowed less from Moses than from the abstractions of Plato, whose shadowy hints he has embodied in a more solid form. Speaking of the Creator, he says that there are three orders, of which the best is the Being that is, and who has two ancient powers near him, one on one side and one on the other, the one on the right hand being called God, and the one on the left Lord; and that the middle divinity, accompanied on each side by his powers, presents to the enlightened mind sometimes one image and sometimes three. He was thus the first Jewish writer that applied to the Deity the mystical notion of the Egyptians, that every thing perfect was of three parts. Philo's writings are chiefly religious, each beginning with a text of the Old Testament; and they are valuable as showing the steps by which the philosophy of Greece may be traced from the writings of Plato to those of Justin Martyr and Clemens Alexandrinus. They give us the earliest example of how the mystical interpretation of the Scriptures was formed into a system, by which every text was twisted to unfold some important philosophic or religious truth to the learned student, at the same time that to the unlearned reader it conveyed only the simple historic fact. His historical works are on the Therapeutæ, the Jews'

De cherubim.

De agriculturâ.

De Abrahamo.

sufferings under Flaccus, and his own embassy to Rome. Philo's writings raised the school of Alexandria to the rank that it held under the first two Ptolemies. They unite to the religion of Moses all that is most valuable in the moral philosophy of Plato, and show that the writer was only not a Christian. In the history of philosophy and of religion, the writings of Philo must always claim the student's most careful attention; they explain how Platonism became united to Judaism, and again show us the point of agreement between the new Platonists and the Platonic Christians.

(38) By this time the Hellenistic Jews, while suffering under severe political disabilities, had taken up a high literary position in Alexandria, and had forced their opinions into the notice of the Greeks. The glowing earnestness of their philosophy, now put forward in a Platonic dress, and their improved style, approaching even classic elegance, placed their writings on a lofty eminence far above anything which the cold lifeless grammarians of the Museum were then producing. The philosophers of the Museum had been beaten with their own weapons. For a century past the Greeks had ceased to think all foreigners barbarians; they had been cultivating more and more an acquaintance with Eastern opinions; and they were now forced to acknowledge the Jews as the first writers of the Alexandrian school.

(39) Apion, who went to Rome to plead against Philo, was a native of the Great Oasis, but as he was born of Greek parents he claimed and received the title and privileges of an Alexandrian, which he denied to the Jews who were born in the city. He had studied under Didymus and Apollonius and Euphranor, and was one of the most laborious of the grammarians and editors of Homer. But we can feel little respect for the critic whose opinion is now only quoted for the proper place of a Greek accent. In Alexandria philosophy had fled from the Museum, and taken shelter in the synagogue. All his writings are now lost. Some of them were attacks upon the Jews and their religion, calling in question the truth of the Jewish history and the justice of that nation's claim to high antiquity; and to these attacks we owe Josephus's Answer, in which several valuable fragments

Suidas.

Eustathius, in Iliad. A. 20, &c.

of Pagan history are saved by being quoted against the Pagans in support of the Old Testament. One of his works was his Ægyptiaca, an account of what he thought most curious in Egypt. But his learned trifling is now lost, and nothing remains of it but his account of the meeting between Androclus and the lion, which took place in the amphitheatre at Rome, when Apion was there on his embassy. Androclus was a runaway slave, who when retaken was brought to Rome to be thrown before an African lion for the amusement of the citizens, and as a punishment for his flight. But the fierce and hungry beast, instead of tearing him to pieces, wagged his tail at him, and licked his feet. It seems that the slave, when he fled from his master, had gained the friendship of the lion in the Libyan desert, first by pulling a thorn out of his foot, and then by living three years with him in a cave; and, when both were brought in chains to Rome, Androclus found a grateful friend in the amphitheatre where he thought to have met with a cruel death.

A. Gellius, lib. v. 14.

(40) We may for a moment leave our history, to bid a last farewell to the family of the Ptolemies. Augustus, after leading Selene, the daughter of Cleopatra and Antony, through the streets of Rome in his triumph, had given her in marriage to the younger Juba, the historian of Africa; and about the same time he gave to the husband the kingdom of Mauritania, the inheritance of his fathers. His son Ptolemy succeeded him on the throne, but was soon turned out of his kingdom. We trace this last of the Ptolemies in his travels through Greece and Asia Minor by the inscriptions remaining to his honour. The citizens of Xanthus in Lycia set up a monument to him; and at Athens his statue was placed beside that of Philadelphus in the gymnasium of Ptolemy, near the temple of Theseus, where he was honoured as of founder's kin. He was put to death without cause by Caligula. Drusilla, another grandchild of Cleopatra and Antony, married Antonius Felix, the procurator of Judæa, after the death of his first wife, who was also named Drusilla. These are the last notices that we meet with of the royal family of Egypt.

Dion Cassius, lib. xlii.

Strabo, lib xvii.

Suetonius, Vit. Calig.

Boeckh. Inscrip. 4269, 360.

Pausanius, lib. i. 17.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. v.

Acts, xxiv. 24.

(41) As soon as the news of Caligula's death reached Egypt, the joy of the Jews knew no bounds. They at once flew to arms to revenge themselves on the Alexandrians, whose streets were again the seat of civil war. The governor did what he could to quiet both parties, but was not wholly successful till the decree of the new emperor reached Alexandria. In this CLAUDIUS (see Fig. 50) again granted to the Jews the full rights of citizenship, which they had enjoyed under the Ptolemies, and which had been allowed by Augustus; he left them to choose their own high-priest, to enjoy their own religion without hindrance, and he repealed the laws of Caligula under which they had been groaning. At this time the Jewish alabarch in Egypt was Demetrius, a man of wealth and high birth, who had married Mariamne, the daughter of the elder Agrippa.

Josephus, Antiq. xix. 5. A.D. 41.

Fig. 50.

Josephus, Antiq. xx. 7

(42) The government under Claudius was mild and just, at least as far as a government could be in which every tax-gatherer, every military governor, and every sub-prefect meant to enrich himself by his appointment. Every Roman officer, from the general down to the lowest tribune, claimed the right of travelling through the country free of expense, and of seizing the carts and cattle of the villagers to carry him forward to the next town, under the pretence of being a courier on the public service. The temper of the peasants was sorely tried by this tyranny; and difficult would they have found it to obey the command, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile go with him twain." But we have a decree of the ninth year of this reign, carved on the temple in the Great Oasis, in which Cneius Capito, the prefect of Egypt, endeavours to put a stop to this injustice. He orders that no traveller shall have the privilege of a courier unless he has a proper warrant, and that then he shall only claim a free lodging; that clerks in the villages shall keep a register of all that is taken on account of the public service; and that if anybody make an unjust claim he shall pay four times the amount to the informer and six times the amount to the emperor. But

Hoskins's Visit to Oasis.

royal decrees could do little or nothing in cities and provinces where there were no judges to enforce them; and the people of the distant province of Upper Egypt must have felt this well-meant law as a cruel insult when they were told that if they were ill-used they might bring up their complaints to Basilides, the freedman of the emperor at Alexandria. The employment of the informer is a full acknowledgment of the weakness of this absolute government, and that the prefect had not the power to enforce his own decrees; and, when we compare this law with that of Alexander on his conquest of the country, we have no difficulty in seeing why Egypt rose under the Ptolemies and sunk under the selfish policy of Augustus.

(43) Claudius was somewhat of a scholar and an author; he had studied history by the help, or at least by the advice, of Livy, and he wrote several volumes both in Greek and in Latin. The former he might perhaps think would be chiefly valued in Alexandria; and when he founded a new college in that city, called after himself the Claudian Museum, he ordered that on given days every year his history of Carthage should be publicly read in one museum, and his history of Italy in the other; thus securing during his reign an attention to his writings which their merits alone would not have gained.

Suetonius, Vit. Claud. 42.

(44) Under the government of Claudius the Egyptians were again allowed to coin money; and in his first year begins that most rich and elegant series in which every coin is dated with the year of the emperor's reign. The coins of the Ptolemies were strictly Greek in their workmanship, and the few Egyptian characters that we see upon them are so much altered by the classic taste of the die-engraver that we hardly know them again. But it is much otherwise with the coins of the emperors; they are covered with the ornaments, characters, and religious ceremonies of the native Egyptians; and, though the style of art is often bad, they are not equalled by any series of coins whatever in the service they render to the historian.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(45) It was in this reign, in the time of the elder Pliny, that the route through Egypt to India first became really known to the Greeks and Romans. The trade was then so great that Pliny calculated the worth of gold

Pliny, lib. vi. 26.

and silver sent every year to the East at four hundred thousand pounds sterling, in exchange for which Egypt received back goods which in Rome were sold for one hundred times that amount. The merchants went up the Nile to Coptos, whence they travelled through the desert for two hundred and sixty miles to Berenice, the port on the Red Sea; but, as this journey was made only by night to avoid the heat, and on camels' backs, it was not done in less than twelve days. From Berenice they set sail about the middle of July, when the Dog-star rose with the sun, and in about thirty days reached either Ocelis, a town on the southern coast of Arabia, or Canes in the frankincense country, on the eastern coast of Africa not far from the equator. Thence, trusting themselves to the trade wind, which had lately been discovered by a pilot named Hippalus, they boldly crossed the Arabian Sea, and reached Muziris, a port on the Malabar coast of India, in forty days, or in the middle of September. They left India on their return at the end of December. The place on the Indian coast which the Egyptian merchant vessels then reached is learnt from the coins found there; and as we know the course of the trade wind by which they arrived, we also know the part of Africa where they left the shore and braved the dangers of the ocean. A hoard of Roman gold coins of these reigns has been dug up in our own days near Calicut, under the roots of a banyan tree. It tells its own tale. It had been there buried by an Alexandrian merchant on his arrival from this voyage, and left safe under the cover of the sacred tree to await his return from a second journey. But he died before his return, and his secret died with him. The whole voyage from Alexandria and back took rather less than a year. For the next fourteen hundred years this continued to be the route between Europe and India, till the voyage round the Cape of Good Hope was discovered by the Portuguese, and that important trade was overthrown in a moment; and, curious to remark, by an equally sudden change in our own days, by the invention of steam-boats, the Red Sea is again the route to India, and that country is now reached from England in half the time that it used to be reached from Berenice. The products of the Indian trade were chiefly silk, diamonds and other precious stones, ginger, spices, and

some scents. The state of Ethiopia was then such that no trade came down the Nile to Syene; and the pro

Pliny, lib. vi. 34.

duce of southern Africa was brought by coasting vessels to Berenice, the before-mentioned port on the Red Sea. These products were ivory, rhinoceros teeth, hippopotamus skins, tortoise shell, apes, monkeys, and slaves.

(46) The Romans in most cases collected the

Codex Theod. xii. 97.

revenues of a province by means of a publican or

Pliny, lib. vi. 24.

farmer, to whom the taxes were let by auction; but such was the importance of Egypt that the same jealousy which made them think its government too great to be trusted to a man of high rank, made them think its revenues too large to be trusted to one farmer. The smaller branches of the Egyptian revenue were however let out as usual, and even the collection of the customs of the whole of the Red Sea was not thought too much to trust to one citizen. Annius Plocamus, who farmed them in this reign, had a little fleet under his command to collect them with; and, tempted either by trade or plunder, his ships were sometimes as far out as the south coast of Arabia. On one occasion one of his freedmen in the command of a vessel was carried by a north wind into the open ocean, and after being fifteen days at sea found himself on the coast of Ceylon. This island was not then wholly new to the geographers of Egypt and Europe. It had been heard of by the pilots in the voyage of Alexander the Great; Eratosthenes had given it a place in his map; and it had often been reached from Africa by the sailors of the Red Sea in wickerwork boats made of papyrus; but this was the first time it had been visited by an European.

(47) In the neighbourhood of this above-mentioned road

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4713 f.

from Coptos to Berenice were the porphyritic quarries and the emerald mines, which were briskly worked under the Emperor Claudius. The mountain was now named the Claudian Mountain.

(48) As this route for trade became known, the geo-

Virgil. Georg. iv. 288.

graphers began to understand the wide space that separates India from Africa. Hitherto, notwith-

Josephus, Antiq. lib. I. i. 3.

standing a few voyages of discovery, it had been the common opinion that Persia was in the neighbourhood of Ethiopia. The Greeks had thought that the Nile came from the east and rose in India; in opposition

to the Jews, who said that the Nile was the River Gihon of the Garden of Eden, which came from the west and made a circuit round the whole of the land of Cush, or Ethiopia. The names of these countries got misused accordingly; and even after the mistake was cleared up we sometimes find Ethiopia called India. Genesis, ch. ii. 13.

(49) Pliny, though perhaps he had never been in Egypt, gives us an account of many of the products of the country, and is very particular in his notice of the papyrus and its uses (see Fig. 51), that rush upon which he boasted, in the pride of authorship, that man's immortality rested. It was grown in the pools of stagnant water which were left after the overflow of the Nile. Its thick knotted roots were used as wood, both for making fires and for furniture; and its graceful feathery head was often entwined round the statues of the gods as a garland. Wickerwork boats were woven out of its stalk, while of the bark were made sails, cordage, and cloth. It was chewed as food both raw and cooked, though the juice only was swallowed. Paper was made of it by splitting it into sheets as thin as possible, two courses of which were laid crosswise and glued together by the natural juice of the plant. The best kind had been called Hieratic paper, because it was used for the sacred books; but in the time of Augustus two better kinds were made, which were named Augustan and Livian, after himself and his wife. A fourth and fifth of worse quality were called Fannian, from the name of a clever Roman maker, and Amphitheatric, from the name of the street in Rome where it was sold. A sixth kind was called Saitic, from the city of Sais, near which it grew in greater quantity, but of a still worse quality. A seventh, called Leneotic, was nearer the bark, and so much worse as to be sold by weight. The Lib. xiii. 22.

Fig. 51.

eighth and last kind was the Emporetic, which was not good enough to write on, and was used in the shops to wrap up parcels. The first two were thirteen inches wide, the Hieratic eleven, the Fannian ten, the Amphitheatric nine, while the Emporetic was not more than six inches wide. After a time the best kinds were found too thin for books, as the writing on one side often made a blot through to the other; and so in the reign of Claudius Cæsar a new kind was made, called the Claudian, in which the under course was of thicker strips of the plant. The linen and cotton trades were both valuable; the flax was grown chiefly in Lower Egypt, near Tanis, Pelusium, and Butos; while the cotton was grown in Upper Egypt on the Arabic side of the Nile. Alexandria was also the granary for all the neighbouring countries, and when in the beginning of this reign a great dearth and famine came over all Judæa, the authorities in Jerusalem, like Jacob of old, sent down to Egypt to buy corn, to relieve their starving poor.

Pliny, lib. xix. 2.

Josephus, Antiq. xx. 2.

(50) The Egyptian chemists were able to produce very bright dyes, by methods then unknown to Greece or Rome. They dipped the cloth first into a liquid of one colour, called a mordant, to prepare it, and then into a liquid of a second colour; and it came out dyed of a third colour, unlike either of the former. The ink with which they wrote the name of a deceased person on the mummy-cloth, like our own marking-ink, was made with nitrate of silver. Their knowledge of chemistry was far greater than that of their neighbours, and the science is even now named from the country of its birth. The later Arabs called it Alchemia, *the Egyptian art*, and hence our words alchemy and chemistry. So also Naphtha, or *rock oil*, from the coast of the Red Sea, bears an Egyptian name. To some Egyptian stones the Romans gave their own names; as the black glassy obsidian from Nubia they called after Obsidius, who found it; the black Tiberian marble with white spots, and the Augustan marble with regular wavy veins, were both named after the emperors. Porphyry was now used for statues for the first time; and sometimes to make a kind of patchwork figure, in which the clothed parts were of the coloured stone, while

Pliny, lib. xxxv. 42.

Lib. xxxvi. 67.

Lib xxxvi. 11.

the head, hands, and feet were of white marble. And it was thought that diamonds were nowhere to be found but in the Ethiopian gold mines. Pliny, l.b. xxxvii. 15.

(51) Several kinds of wine were made in Egypt; some in the Arsinoite nome on the banks of the Lake Mœris; and a poor Libyan wine at Antiphræ on the coast, a hundred miles from Alexandria. Wine had also been made in Upper Egypt in small quantities time out of mind, as we learn from the monuments; but it was grown with difficulty and cost, and was not good; it was not valued by the Greeks. It was poor and thin, and drunk only by those who were feverish and afraid of anything stronger. That of Anthylla, to the east of Alexandria, was very much better. But better still were the thick luscious Tæniotic and the mild delicate Maræotic wines. This last was first grown at Plinthine, but afterwards on all the banks of the Lake Maræotis. The Maræotic wine was white and sweet and thin, and very little heating or intoxicating. Horace had carelessly said of Cleopatra that she was drunk with Maræotic wine; but Lucan, who better knew its quality, says that the headstrong lady drank wine far stronger than the Maræotic. Near Sebennytus three kinds of wine were made; one bitter, named Peuce, a second sparkling, named Æthalon, and the third Thasian, from a vine imported from Thasus. But none of these Egyptian wines were thought equal to those of Greece and Italy. Nor were they made in quantities large enough or cheap enough for the poor; and here, as in other countries, the common people for their intoxicating drink used beer or spirits made from barley. The Egyptian sour wine, however, made very good vinegar, and it was then exported for sale in Rome.

Strabo, lib. xvii.

Athenæus, lib. i.

Carmina, l. xxxv.i. 14.

Lib. x. 161.

Pliny, lib. xiv. 9.

Lib. xiv. 29.

Juvenal, Sat. xiii. 85.

Fig. 52.

(52) The foreign wines were imported into Alexandria in tall narrow earthen jars, with two handles and no foot (see Fig. 52). Much the greater part of this pottery was made in the island of Rhodes, where very little wine was grown; but many of the wine districts made their own wine jars.

Sloddart, in R. Society of Lit. vol. iii.

The names stamped upon the broken handles found among the rubbish of ancient Alexandria prove that its citizens drank wine from Corinth in Greece, and Cnidus in Caria, from the islands of Crete, Cyprus, Thasus, and Chios, from Apamea on the Orontes, and from a large district on the southern coast of the Black Sea, as well as from Sicily and other places nearer to Rhodes that exported their wine in the Rhodian jars.

Lucan, x. 161.

Meroë, also, in the south of Ethiopia, gave its name to an intoxicating drink, which was most likely made from the dates with which some part of Ethiopia abounded.

(53) During this half century that great national work the Lake of Mœris, by which thousands of acres had been flooded and made fertile, and the watering of the lower country regulated, was, through the neglect of the embankments, at once destroyed. The latest traveller who mentions it is Strabo, and the latest geographer Pomponius Mela. By its means the province of Arsinoë was made one of the most fruitful and beautiful spots in Egypt. Here only does the olive grow wild. Here the vine will grow. And by the help of this embanked lake the province was made yet more fruitful. But before Pliny wrote the bank had given way, the pent-up waters had made for themselves a channel into the lake now called Birket el Keiroun, and the two small pyramids, which had

Lib. v. 9.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 16.

Fig. 53.

hitherto been surrounded by water, then stood on dry ground. Thus was the country slowly going to ruin by the faults of

the government, and ignorance in the foreign rulers. But on the other hand the beautiful temple of Latopolis, which had been begun under the Ptolemies, was largely added to in this reign, and bears the name of Claudius with those of some later emperors on its portico and walls (see Fig. 53). The columns are most massive, and as elegant as they are grand. The capitals are copied, some from palm leaves, and some from papyrus flowers. The temple was dedicated to the god Kneph; but in this city a sacred fish also received the worship of the inhabitants. We find the name of Claudius also on several other temples of Upper Egypt, particularly on that of Apollinopolis Magna.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

Strabo, lib. xvii. 47.

(54) In the Egyptian language the word for a year is *Bait*, which is also the name of a bird. In hieroglyphics this word is spelt by a Palm-branch *Bai*, and the letter T, followed sometimes by a circle as a picture of the year (see Fig. 54). Hence arose among a people fond of mystery and allegory a mode of speaking of the year under the name of a palm-branch or of a bird; and they formed a fable out of a mere confusion of words. The Greeks, who were not slow to copy Egyptian mysticism, called this fabulous bird the *Phœnix*, from their own name for the palm-tree. The end of any long period of time they called the return of the phœnix to earth. The Romans borrowed the fable, though perhaps without understanding the allegory; and in the seventh year of this reign, when the emperor celebrated the secular games at Rome, at the end of the eighth century since the city was built, it was said that the phœnix had come to Egypt and was thence brought to Rome. This was in the consulship of Plautius and Vitellius; and it would seem to be only from mistakes in the name that Pliny places the event eleven years earlier, in the consulship of Plautius and Papinius, and that Tacitus places it thirteen years earlier, in the consulship of Fabius and Vitellius. This fable is here of no importance; but, as on other occasions it is connected with some of the remarkable epochs in Egyptian history, it is as well that no mention of it by the historians should be passed by without notice. The

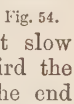


Fig. 54.

Aurelius Victor, Vit. Claudii. A.D. 47.

Pliny, lib. x. 2.

Annal. lib. vi. 28.

story of the Phœnix lost nothing by travelling to a distance. In Rome it was said that this wonderful bird was a native of Arabia, where it lived for five hundred years, that on its death a grub came out of its body, which in due time became a perfect bird; and that the new phœnix brought to Egypt the bones of its parent in the nest of spices in which it had died, and laid them on the altar in the temple of the sun in Heliopolis. It then returned to Arabia to live in its turn for five hundred years, and die and give life again to another as before. The Christians saw in this story a type of the resurrection; and Clement, bishop of Rome, quotes it as such in his Epistle to the Corinthians.

Clemens Romanus, Epist. Cor.

(55) In the beginning of the reign of NERO (see Fig. 55), an Egyptian Jew, who claimed to be listened to as a prophet, raised the minds of his countrymen into a ferment of religious zeal by preaching about the sufferings of their brethren in Judæa; and he was able to get together a body of men, called in reproach the Sicarii, or *ruffians*, whose numbers are variously stated at four thousand and at thirty thousand, whom he led out of Egypt to free the holy city from the bondage of the heathen. But Felix, the Roman governor, led against them the garrison of Jerusalem, and easily scattered the half-armed rabble. By such acts of religious zeal on the part of the Jews they were again brought to blows with the Greeks of Alexandria. The Macedonians, as the latter still called themselves, had met in public assembly to send an embassy to Rome, and some Jews who entered the meeting, which as citizens they had a full right to do, were seized and ill-treated by them as spies. They would perhaps have even been put to death if a large body of their countrymen had not run to their rescue. The Jews attacked the assembled Greeks with stones and lighted torches, and would have burned the amphitheatre and all that were in it, if the prefect, Tiberius Alexander, had not sent some of the elders of their own nation to calm their angry feelings. But though the mischief was stopped for a

Josephus, Bell. Jud. ii. 13. A.D. 55.

Acts, xxi. 33.

Fig. 55.

Bell. Jud. ii. 18.

time, it soon broke out again; and the prefect was forced to call out the garrison of two Roman legions and five thousand Libyans before he could re-establish peace in the city. The Jews were always the greatest sufferers in these civil broils; and Josephus says that fifty thousand of his countrymen were left dead in the streets of Alexandria. But this number is very improbable, as the prefect was a friend to the Jewish nation, and as the Roman legions were not withdrawn to the camp till they had guarded the Jews in carrying away and burying the bodies of their friends.

(56) It was a natural policy on the part of the emperors to change a prefect whenever his province was disturbed by rebellion, as we have seen in the case of Flaccus, who was recalled by Caligula. It was easier to send a new governor than to inquire into a wrong or to redress a grievance; and accordingly in the next year C. Balbillus was sent from Rome as prefect of Egypt. He is praised by Seneca as an elegant and learned writer; but his history of Egypt is now lost. We only learn from it that crocodiles, which are now not often seen below the Thebaid, were then still common in the Delta; Balbillus fancied that he saw them fighting with the dolphins in the Heracleotic mouth of the Nile. He reached Alexandria on the sixth day after leaving the Straits of Sicily, which was spoken of as the quickest voyage known.

Tacitus, Annal. xiii.

A D. 56.

Nat. Quæst. iv. 13.

Pliny, lib. xix. 1.

(57) The Alexandrian ships were better built and better manned than any others, and, as a greater number of vessels sailed every year between that port and Puteoli, on the coast of Italy, than between any other two places, no voyage was better understood or more quickly performed. They were out of sight of land for five hundred miles between Syracuse and Cyrene. Hence we see that the quickest rate of sailing, with a fair wind, was at that time about one hundred and fifty miles in the twenty-four hours. But these ships had very little power of bearing up against the wind; and if it were contrary the voyage became tedious. They had two masts. The mainmast carried a large square mainsail, and sometimes a small topsail. The foremast carried a small square foresail (see Fig. 56). If the captain on sailing out of the port of Alexandria found the wind

westerly, and was unable to creep along the African coast to Cyrene, he stood over to the coast of Asia Minor, in hopes of there finding a more favourable wind. If a storm arose, he ran into the nearest port, perhaps in Crete, perhaps in Malta, there to wait the return of fair weather. If winter then came on, he had to lie by till spring. Thus a vessel laden with Egyptian wheat, leaving Alexandria in September, after the harvest had been brought down to the coast, would sometimes spend five months on its voyage from that port to Puteoli. Such was the case with the ship bearing the sons of Jove as its figure-head, which picked up the apostle Paul and the historian Josephus when they had been wrecked together on the island of Malta; and such perhaps would have been the case with the ship which they before found on the coast of Lycia, had it been able to reach a safe harbour, and not been wrecked at Malta.

Acts, ch. xxvii.

Fig. 56.

Josephus, in Vitâ.

(58) The rocky island of Malta, with one of the largest and safest harbours in the Mediterranean, was a natural place for ships to touch at between Alexandria and Italy. Its population was made up of those races which had sailed upon its waters first from Carthage and then from Alexandria; it was a mixture of Phenicians, Egyptians, and Greco-Egyptians. To judge from the skulls turned up in the

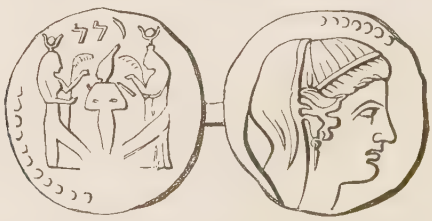


Fig. 57.

burial-places, the Egyptians were the most numerous, and here, as elsewhere, the Egyptian superstitions conquered and

put down all the other superstitions. While the island was under the Phenicians the coins had the head of the Sicilian goddess on one side, and on the other the Egyptian trinity of Isis, Osiris, and Nephthys (see Fig. 57). When it was under the Greek rule the head on the coins received an Egyptian head-dress, and became that of the goddess Isis, and on the other side of the coin was a winged figure of Osiris. It was at this time governed by a Roman governor. The large temple built with barbarian rudeness, and ornamented with the Phenician palm-branch, was on somewhat of a Roman plan, with a circular end to every room (see Fig. 58). But

Acts, xxviii. 7.

Bartlett's Overland Journey.

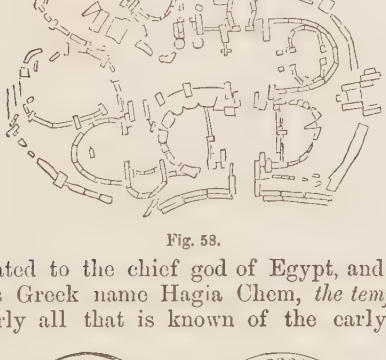


Fig. 58.

it was dedicated to the chief god of Egypt, and is even yet called by its Greek name Hagia Chem, *the temple of Chem.* Such is nearly all that is known of the early history of

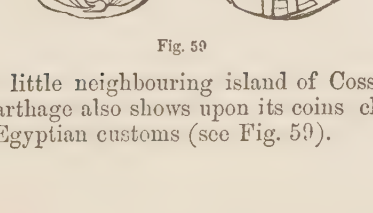


Fig. 59

Malta. The little neighbouring island of Cossyra between Sicily and Carthage also shows upon its coins clear traces of its taste for Egyptian customs (see Fig. 59).

(59) The first five years of this reign, the *quinquennium Neronis*, while the emperor was under the tutorship of the philosopher Seneca, became in Rome proverbial for good government, and on the coinage we see marks of Egypt being equally well treated. In the third year we see on a coin the queen sitting on a throne with the word *Agreement*, as if to praise the young emperor's good feeling in following the advice of his mother Agrippina. On another the emperor is styled *the Young Good-genius*, and he is represented by the sacred basilisk crowned with the double crown of Egypt. The new prefect Balbillus was an Asiatic Greek, and no doubt received his Roman names of Tiberius Claudius on being made a freedman of the late emperor. He governed the country mildly and justly; and the grateful inhabitants declared that under him the Nile was more than usually bountiful, and that its waters always rose to their

Aurelius Victor.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

A.D. 58.

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4730.

Idem. 4699.

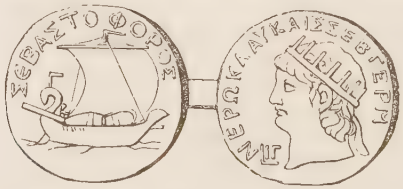


Fig. 60.

just height. But in the latter part of the reign the Egyptians smarted severely under that cruel principle of a despotic monarchy that every prefect, every sub-prefect, and even every deputy tax-gatherer, might be equally despotic in his own department. On a coin of the thirteenth year we see a ship with the word *Emperor-bearer*, being that in which he then sailed into Greece, or in which the Alexandrians thought that he would visit their city (see Fig. 60). But if they had really hoped for his visit as a pleasure, they must have thought it a danger escaped when they learned his character; they must have been undeceived when the Egyptian prefect Cæcinna Tuscus was punished with banishment for venturing to bathe in the bath which was meant for the emperor's use if he had come.

Dion Cass. l.b. lxiii.

(60) During the first century and a half of Roman sway in Egypt the school of Alexandria was nearly silent. The professors were still followed by numerous pupils, who, after taking lessons in rhetoric at Rome, and perhaps studying philosophy at Athens, might for some time sit under a grammarian at Alexandria; but we meet with no author of note. We have a few poems by Leonides of Alexandria, one of which is addressed to the Empress Poppæa, as the wife of Jupiter, on his presenting a celestial globe to her on her birthday. Pamphila wrote a miscellaneous history of entertaining stories, and her lively simple style makes us very much regret its loss. Her Commentaries on the philosophers are often quoted by Diogenes Laertius. Chæremon, a Stoic philosopher, had been, during the last reign, at the head of the Alexandrian library, but he was removed to Rome as one of the tutors to the young Nero. He is ridiculed by Martial for writing in praise of death, when from age and poverty he was less able to enjoy life. We still possess a most curious though short account by him of the monastic habits of the ancient Egyptians; but his astronomical writings are lost, and they were probably worth but little, as he is laughed at by Strabo for writing on the subject. He also wrote on Hieroglyphics; and a small fragment containing his opinion of the meanings of nineteen characters still remains to us. But he is not always right; he thinks the characters were used allegorically for thoughts, not for sounds; and fancies that the priests used them to keep secret the real nature of the gods.

Anthologia Græca.

Photius. cod. clxxv.

Suidas.

Epigr. xi. 57.

Ap. Porphyr. De abstinen. iv.

Lib. xvii.

Ap. Tzetz. in Iliad.

(61) He was succeeded at the Museum by his pupil Dionysius, who had the charge of the library till the reign of Trajan. Dionysius was also employed by the prefect as a secretary of state, or, in the language of the day, secretary to the embassies, epistles, and answers. He was the author of the Periegesis, and aimed at the rank of a poet by writing a treatise on geography in heroic verse. From this work he is named Dionysius Periegetes. While careful to remind us, on the one hand, that Pelusium was an Asiatic city of Phenician sailors, and, on the other, that his birthplace Alexandria was a Macedonian city, he gives due

Suidas.

honour to Egypt and the Egyptians. There is no river, says he, equal to the Nile for carrying fertility and adding to the happiness of the land. It divides Asia from Libya, falling between rocks at Syene, and then passing by the old and famous city of Thebes, where Memnon every morning salutes his beloved Aurora as she rises. On its banks dwells a rich and glorious race of men, who were the first to cultivate the arts of life; the first to make trial of the plough and sow their seed in a straight furrow; and the first to map the heavens and trace the sloping path of the sun.

(62) If we may trust to the traditions of the church, it was in this reign that Christianity was brought into Egypt by the evangelist Mark, the disciple of the apostle Peter. He had been taken to Cyprus by Barnabas, his uncle, who was a native of that island. From thence he may have sailed to Alexandria. Many were there craving for religious food more real than the old superstitions. The Egyptian had been shaken in his attachment to the sacred animals by Greek ridicule. The Greek had been weakened in his belief of old Homer's gods by living with men who had never heard of them. Both were tired of worshipping the stones that they had shaped with their own hands. Both were dissatisfied with the scheme of explaining the actions of their gods by means of allegory. The crumbling away of the old opinions left men more fitted to receive the new religion from Galilee. Mark's preaching converted crowds in Alexandria; but the length of his stay there is unknown. We find however that he had joined Paul in Rome, in about the sixth year of this reign, leaving Annianus to watch over the growing church. The spread of Christianity was rapid, both among the Greeks and the Egyptians, but we must not hope to find any early traces of it in the historians. It was at first embraced by the unlearned and the poor, whose deeds and opinions are seldom mentioned in history; and we may readily believe the scornful reproach of the unbelievers, that it was chiefly received by the unfortunate, the unhappy, the despised, and the sinful. When the white-robed priestesses of Ceres carried the sacred basket through the streets of Alexandria they cried out, "Sinners away, or keep your eyes to the ground; keep your eyes to the ground!"

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. ii. 16.

Acts, xv. 39.

A.D. 51.

Coloss. iv. 10.

Callimachus, in Cererem.

When the crier, standing on the steps of the portico in front of the great temple, called upon the Pagans to come near and join in the celebration of their mysteries, he cried out, "All ye who are clean of hands and pure of heart, come to the sacrifice; all ye who are guiltless in thought and deed, come to the sacrifice." But many a repentant sinner and humble spirit must have drawn back in distrust from a summons which to him was so forbidding, and been glad to hear the Good Tidings of God's mercy offered by Christianity to those who labour and are heavy laden, and to the broken-hearted who would turn away from their wickedness. While such were the chief followers of the Gospel, it was not likely to be much noticed by the historians; and we must wait till it forced its way into the schools and the palace before we shall find many traces of the rapidity with which it was spreading.

Celsus, ap. Origen, iii.

(63) Annianus is usually called the first bishop of Alexandria; and Eusebius, who lived two hundred years later, has given us the names of his successors in an unbroken chain. If we would inquire whether the early converts to Christianity in Alexandria were Jews, Greeks, or Egyptians, we have nothing to guide us but the names of these bishops. Annianus, or Annaniah, as his name was written by the Arabic historians, was most likely a Jew; indeed the evangelist Mark would begin by addressing himself to the Jews, and would leave the care of the infant church to one of his own nation. In the Platonic Jews, Christianity found a soil so exactly suited to its reception that it is only by the dates that the Therapeutæ of Alexandria and their historian Philo are proved not to be Christian. The Epistle to the Hebrews in the New Testament, which was written by some unknown teacher to an unknown congregation of Jewish converts, shows us the philosophical opinions held by Alexandrian Jews when converted to Christianity. Its arguments are no doubt such as those which Apollos, the learned Alexandrian, the friend of the Apostle Paul, pressed upon his hearers; and in the island of Cyprus the Apostle Barnabas was educated among the same opinions. The holders of these opinions formed an early sect in the church; and when some of the Pagan converts ranged themselves as followers of Paul,

Eutychii Annales.

Acts, xviii 24.

and some of the Jewish converts as followers of Peter, there was a third body of Christians who called themselves followers of Apollos, from their love of the mystical philosophy of Alexandria. It was in the close union in Alexandria between the Platonic Jews and the Platonists that Christianity found its easiest path to the ears and hearts of the Pagans. The bishops that followed seem to have been Greek converts. Before the death of Annaniah, Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Roman armies, and the Jews sunk in their own eyes and in those of their fellow-citizens throughout the empire; hence the second bishop of Alexandria was less likely to be of Hebrew blood; and it was long before any Egyptians aimed at rank in the church.

1 Cor. i. 12.

(64) During these reigns the Ethiopian Arabs kept up their irregular warfare against the southern frontier. The tribe most dreaded were the Blemmyes, an uncivilised people, described by the affrighted neighbours as having no heads, but with eyes and mouth on the breast; and it was under that name that the Arabs spread during each century further and further towards Egypt, separating the province from the more cultivated tribes of Upper Ethiopia or Meroë. The cities along the banks of the Nile in Lower Ethiopia, between Meroë and the town of Hierasycaminon in Nubia, were ruined by being in the debateable land between the two nations. The early Greek travellers had counted about twenty cities on each side of the Nile between Syene and Meroë; but when, in a moment of leisure, the Roman government proposed to punish and stop the inroads of these troublesome neighbours, and sent forward a tribune with a guard of soldiers, he reported on his return that the whole country was a desert, and that there was scarcely a city inhabited on either side of the Nile beyond Nubia. But he had not marched very far. The interior of Africa was then as little known as now. To seek for the fountains of the Nile was another name for an impossible task; and, though modern travellers have already pushed so far back as to learn that it is one of the longest rivers in the world, the chief mountains in which it rises still remain closed against us by the same difficulties, the uncivilised habits of the Arabs. The Romans made no

Dionysius Perieg. 42. Pliny, lib. v. 8.

Lib. vi. 35.

Lucanus, lib. x. 190.

attempt to hold the country beyond Hierasycaminon, the limit of the tract called the Dodecaschœnos. This tract they chiefly valued for the sandstone quarries of Kardassy, and Talmis or Kalabshee; as it was so much easier to bring the stone down the river from Nubia, for the buildings of Philæ and Elephantine, than up the river from Silsilis. The rocks between those two places were granitic, and too hard for building stone. To guard these sandstone quarries troops were usually stationed at Parembole and Talmis.

(65) But Egypt itself was so quiet as not to need the presence of so large a Roman force as usual to keep it in obedience; and when Vespasian, who commanded Nero's armies in Syria, found the Jews more obstinate in their rebellion and less easily crushed than he expected, the emperor sent the young Titus to Alexandria, to lead to his father's assistance all the troops that could be spared. Titus led into Palestine through Arabia two legions, the Fifth and the Tenth, which were then in Egypt; and accordingly we find him described in the Book of Revelation as the second beast with two horns that came up against Judæa by land, while Vespasian, now in command of parts of ten legions, is the first beast with ten horns that came up out of the sea.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. iii. 1.

Ch. xiii.

(66) We find a temple of this reign in the Oasis of Dakleh, or the Western Oasis, which seems to have been a more flourishing spot in the time of the Romans than when Egypt itself was better governed. It is so far removed from the cities in the valley of the Nile that its position, and even existence, was long unknown to Europeans; and to such hiding-places as this many of the Egyptians fled, to be further from the tyranny of the Roman tax-gatherers.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REIGNS OF GALBA, OTHO, VITELLIUS, VESPASIAN, TITUS, AND DOMITIAN. A.D. 68—97.

(1) HITHERTO the Roman empire had descended for just one hundred years through five emperors like a family inheritance; but on the death of Nero the Julian and Claudian families were at an end, and GALBA, who was raised to the purple by the choice of the soldiers, endeavoured to persuade the Romans and their dependent provinces that they had regained their liberties. The Egyptians may have been puzzled by the word *Freedom*, then struck upon the coins by their foreign masters, but must have been pleased to find it accompanied with a redress of grievances.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. i. A.D. 68.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(2) Galba began his reign with the praiseworthy endeavour of repairing the injustice done by his cruel predecessor. He at once recalled the prefect of Egypt, and appointed in his place Tiberius Julius Alexander, an Alexandrian, a son of the former prefect of that name; and thus Egypt was under the government of a native prefect. The peaceable situation of the Great Oasis, withdrawn from many of those tumults which have in other places overthrown temples and destroyed records, has saved a long Greek inscription of the decree which was now issued in redress of the grievances suffered under Nero. It is a proclamation by Julius Demetrius, the commander of the Oasis, quoting the decree of Tiberius Julius Alexander, the new prefect of Egypt. The prefect acknowledges that the loud complaints with which he was met on entering upon his government were well founded, and he promises that the unjust taxes shall cease; that nobody shall be forced to act as a provincial tax-gatherer; that no debts shall be cancelled or sales made void under the plea of money owing to the revenue; that no freeman shall be thrown into prison for debt, unless it be a debt due to the royal revenue, and that

Hoskins's Visit to Oasis.

no private debt shall be made over to the tax-gatherer to be by him collected as a public debt; that no property settled on the wife at marriage shall be seized for taxes due from the husband; and that all new charges and claims which had grown up within the last five years shall be repealed. In order to discourage informers, whom in the weakness of their government the prefects had much employed, and by whom the families in Alexandria were much harassed, and to whom he laid the great falling off in the population of that city, he orders, that if anybody should make three charges and fail in proving them, he shall forfeit half his property and lose the right of bringing an action at law. The land had always paid a tax in proportion to the number of acres overflowed and manured by the waters of the Nile; and the husbandmen had latterly been frightened by the double threat of a new measurement of the land, and of making it at the same time pay according to the ancient registers of the overflow when the canals had been more open and more acres flooded; but the prefect promises that there shall be no new measurement, and that they shall only be taxed according to the actual overflow.

(3) But Galba's reign was short. An ambitious general, raised to the throne by the bought or even unbought choice of the army, has always been found less able to secure the obedience of his subjects than those princes who gained their rank by the accident of birth. The power that made is

Fig. 61.

tempted to unmake; and thus Galba was murdered after a reign of seven months. Some of his coins, however, are dated in the second year of his reign, according to the Alexandrian custom of counting the years. They called the 29th of August, the first new-year's day after the sovereign came to the throne, the first day of his second year (see Fig. 61).

(4) On his death, OTHO was acknowledged as emperor by Rome and the East, while the hardy legions of Germany thought themselves entitled to choose for themselves, and they set up their own general Vitellius. The two legions in Egypt sided with the four legions in Syria under Mucianus, and the three legions which under Vespasian were carrying on the memorable war against the Jews; and all took the oaths to Otho. We find no hieroglyphical inscriptions during this short reign of a few weeks, but there are many Alexandrian coins to prove the truth of the historian; and some of them, like those of Galba, bear the unlooked-for word *Freedom*.

Tacitus, Hist. i. ii.

A.D. 69.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(5) In the few weeks which then passed between the news of Otho's death and of Vespasian's being raised to the purple in Syria, VITELLIUS was acknowledged in Egypt; and the Alexandrian mint struck a few coins in his name with the figure of Victory. But as soon as the legions of Egypt heard that the Syrian army had made choice of another emperor, they withdrew their allegiance from Vitellius, and promised it to his Syrian rival.

A.D. 69.

(6) Vespasian was at Cæsarea, in command of the army employed in the Jewish war, when the news reached him that Otho was dead, and that Vitellius had been raised to the purple by the German legions and acknowledged at Rome; and, without wasting more time in refusing the honour than was necessary to prove that his soldiers were in earnest in offering it, he allowed himself to be proclaimed emperor, as the successor of Otho. He would not, however, then risk a march upon Rome, but he sent to Alexandria to tell Tiberius Alexander, the governor of Egypt, what he had done; he ordered him to claim in his name the allegiance of that great province, and added that he should soon be there himself. The two Roman legions in Egypt much preferred the choice of the eastern to that of the western army; and the Alexandrians, who had only just acknowledged Vitellius, readily took the oath to be faithful to Vespasian. This made it less necessary for him to hasten thither, and he only reached Alexandria in time to hear that Vitellius had been murdered after a reign of eight months, and that he himself

Josephus, Bell. Jud. iv. 10.

had been acknowledged as emperor by Rome and the western legions. His Egyptian coins in the first year of his reign, by the word *Peace*, point to the end of the civil war. Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(7) When Vespasian (see Fig. 62) entered Alexandria, he was met by the philosophers and magistrates in great pomp. The philosophers, indeed, in a city where beside the officers of government talent formed the only aristocracy, were a very important body; and Dion, Euphrates, and Apollonius had been useful in securing for Vespasian the allegiance of the Alexandrians. Dion was an orator, who had been professor of rhetoric, but he had given up that study for philosophy. His orations, or rather declamations, written to be spoken in the schools, many of which have come down to us, gained for him the name of Chrysostome, or *golden-mouthed*. But as they were written to be read before a class of admiring pupils, not to be spoken before a noisy assembly of citizens, they have no warmth or earnestness, and are more fitted to teach the figures of speech than to change the lot of kingdoms. An audience of learned critics did not call forth the efforts of the orator like a crowd of rude politicians, whose attention could be gained only by the speaker's skill. Euphrates, his friend, was a Platonist, who afterwards married the daughter of the prefect of Syria, and removed to Rome. There his talents and virtues gained him the friendship of the younger Pliny, who admired his philosophic garb, his mild but reverend countenance, his uncut hair, and long white beard, and quoted him as a proof of the healthy state of the liberal studies in Rome. Apollonius of Tyana, a town near Tarsus, the most celebrated of these philosophers, was one of the first who gained his eminence from the study of Eastern philosophy, which was then rising in the opinions of the Greeks as highly worth their notice. He had been travelling in the East; and, boasting that he was already master of all the fabled wisdom of the Magi of Babylon and of the Gymnosophists of India, he was come to Egypt to compare this mystic philosophy with that of the hermits of

Fig. 62

Philostratus, Vit. Apollon.

Eunapius, Procm.

Epist. i. 10.

Philostratus.

Ethiopia and the Thebaid. Addressing himself as a pupil to the priests, he willingly yielded his belief to their mystic claims; and, whether from being deceived or as a deceiver, whether as an enthusiast or as a cheat, he pretended to have learned all the supernatural knowledge which they pretended to teach. By the Egyptians he was looked upon as the favourite of heaven; he claimed the power of working miracles by his magical arts, and of foretelling events by his knowledge of astrology. In the Thebaid he was so far honoured that at the bidding of the priests one of the sacred trees spoke to him, as had been their custom from of old with favourites (see Fig. 63), and in a clear and rather womanly voice addressed him as a teacher from heaven; and, if we could believe the

Eusebius, contra Hierocl. lib. vi.

Fig. 63.

marvellous stories told of him by his biographer, we should not wonder at Hierocles and other pagans comparing his miracles to those of Jesus. So easy was the working of miracles then thought, that his pretensions were scarcely doubted by those even who had the good sense to see the falseness of his philosophy; and by the writer of the Book of Revelation, when Vespasian is called the Beast, Apollonius is called the false prophet that wrought miracles in the presence of the Beast. Apollonius had before visited Tarsus, Antioch, and Ephesus, and there preached Paganism, about the time that the Apostle Paul was preaching Christianity in those cities; and he was possibly the impostor whom the apostle speaks of as the man of sin, who was opposing and exalting

Ch. xix. 20.

2 Thess. ii. 3, 4.

himself against everything that ought to be revered, and whose tricks were soon to be laid bare.

(8) It was to witness such superstitious practices as these, and to learn the art of deceiving their followers, that the Egyptian priests were now consulted by the Greeks. The oracle at Delphi was silent, but the oracle of Ammon continued to return an answer. The mystic philosophy of the East had come into fashion in Alexandria, and the priests were more celebrated as magicians than as philosophers. They would tell a man's fortune and the year that he was to die by examining the lines of his forehead. Some of them even undertook, for a sum of money, to raise the dead to life, or rather to recall for a time to earth the unwilling spirits, and make them answer any questions that might be put to them. Ventriloquism, or speaking as if from the stomach without moving the face or lips, was an art often practised in Egypt, and perhaps invented there. By this the priests gained a power over the minds of the cheated listeners, and could make them believe that a tree, a statue, or a dead body, was speaking to them. Their pretended miracles were so common, so little thought of, and yet so little disbelieved even by the Christians in a superstitious age when the ordinary course of nature was but little understood, that St. Jerome remarks, that miracles prove nothing, either for or against the truth of a religion; they had been brought forward as successfully by pagans as by Jews or Christians, and had lost their weight as arguments. Any opinions valued in Alexandria naturally flourished in the island of Cyprus, which was joined to that city by so many ties. There a Jew, named Elymas, who professed this mystic philosophy of the Magians, in the last reign received the patronage of the Roman governor, and when the Apostle Paul visited the island, argued against him, and against Christianity in the presence of his patron.

Juvenal, Sat. vi. 553.

Pliny, xxxv. 36.

Apuleius, Metam. lib. ii.

Leviticus, xix. 31, ap. lxx.

In Psalm. 81.

Acts, xiii. 7.

(9) The Alexandrian men of letters seldom erred by wrapping themselves up in pride to avoid the fault of meanness; they usually cringed to the great. Apollonius was wholly at the service of Vespasian, and the emperor repaid the philosopher by flattery as well as by more solid favours.

He kept him always by his side during his stay in Egypt; he acknowledged his rank as a prophet, and tried to make further use of him in persuading the Egyptians of his own divine right to the throne. Vespasian begged him to make use of his prayers that he might obtain from God the empire which he had as yet hardly grasped; but Apollonius, claiming even a higher mission from heaven than Vespasian was granting to him, answered with as much arrogance as flattery, "I have myself already made you emperor." With the intimacy between Vespasian and Apollonius begins the use of gnostic emblems on the Alexandrian coins. The imperial pupil was not slow in learning from such a master; and the people were as ready to believe in the emperor's miracles as in the philosopher's. As Vespasian was walking through the streets of Alexandria, a man well known as having a disease in his eyes threw himself at his feet, and begged of him to heal his blindness. He had been told by the god Serapis that he should regain his sight if the emperor would but deign to spit upon his eyelids. Another man, who had lost the use of a hand, had been told by the same god that he should be healed if the emperor would but trample on him with his feet. Vespasian at first laughed at them and thrust them off; but at last he so far yielded to their prayers and to the flattery of his friends, as to have the physicians of Alexandria consulted whether it was in his power to heal these unfortunate men. The physicians, like good courtiers, were not so unwise as to think it impossible; besides, it seemed meant by the god as a public proof of Vespasian's right to the throne; if he were successful the glory would be his, and if he failed the laugh would be against the cripples. The two men were therefore brought before him, and in the face of the assembled citizens he trampled on one and spit on the other; and his flatterers declared that he had healed the maimed and given sight to the blind.

Eusebius, contra Hierocl. lib. v.

Tacitus, Hist. lib. iv.

(10) Vespasian met with further wonders when he entered the temple of Serapis to consult the god as to the state and fortunes of the empire. He went into the inner sanctuary alone, and to his surprise there he beheld the old Basilides, the freedman of Claudius, one of the chief men of Alexandria, who he knew was then lying dangerously ill, and several

days' journey from the city. He inquired of the priests whether Basilides had been in the temple, and was assured that he had not. He then asked whether he had been in Alexandria; but nobody had seen him there. Lastly, on sending messengers, he learned that he was on his death-bed eighty miles off. With this miracle before his eyes, he could not distrust the answers which the priests gave to his questions.

(11) From Alexandria Vespasian sent back Titus to Judæa to finish the siege of Jerusalem. Titus led his troops two miles and a half to Nicopolis, and there embarking on the canal sailed along the branches of the river to Thmuis, near Mendes. From thence his first day's march was to Tanis, his second to Heracleum, his third to Pelusium, where he crossed the river, his fourth through the desert to Cassium, his fifth to Ostracene, where he was met with a supply of water, his sixth to Rhinocolura, and his seventh to Raphia the border town, where he entered Palestine.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. iv. 11.

(12) The Jewish writer Joseph the son of Matthias, or Flavius Josephus, as he called himself when he entered the service of the emperor, was then in Alexandria. He had been taken prisoner by Vespasian, but had gained his freedom by the betrayal of his country's cause; and he joined the army of Titus and marched to the overthrow of Jerusalem, and of the Temple in which his forefathers had served as high priests. The upper city was defended by Simon; and the temple and lower parts by John. These were the two witnesses of the Book of Revelation. But unfortunately they quarrelled with one another; and notwithstanding the obstinate and heroic struggles of the Jews, Judæa was wholly conquered by the Romans, and Jerusalem and its other fortresses either received Roman garrisons or were dismantled. The Temple was overthrown in the month of September, and within forty-two years, says Origen, of the crucifixion. Titus made slaves of ninety-seven thousand men, many of whom he led with him into Egypt, and then sent them to work in the mines. These were soon followed by a crowd of other brave Jews, who chose rather to quit their homes and live as wanderers in Egypt than to own Vespasian as their king. They knew no lord but

Josephus, Bell. Jud. v. 6. 1.

Revel. chap. xi. 3.

A.D. 70.

Origen. contr. Celsum.

Josephus, Bell. Jud. lib. vii. 10.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iii. 7.

Jehovah; to take the oaths or to pay tribute to Cæsar was to renounce the faith of their fathers. But they found no safety in Egypt. Their Greek brethren turned against them, and handed six hundred of them up to Lupus, the governor of Egypt, to be punished; and their countryman Josephus brands them all with the name of Sicarii, or ruffians. They tried to hide themselves in Thebes and other cities less under the eyes of the Roman governor. They were however followed and taken, and the courage with which the boys and mere children bore their sufferings, sooner than acknowledge Vespasian for their king, drew forth the praise of even the time-serving Josephus.

(13) The Greek Jews of Egypt gained nothing by this treachery towards their Hebrew brethren; they were themselves looked down upon by the Alexandrians and distrusted by the Romans. The emperor ordered the prefect Lupus to shut up the temple at Onion near Heliopolis, in which during the last three hundred years they had been allowed to have an altar, in rivalry to the Temple of Jerusalem. Even Josephus, whose betrayal of his countrymen might have saved him from their enemies, was sent with many others in chains to Rome, and was only set free on his making himself known to Titus. Indeed, when the Hebrew Jews lost their capital and their rank as a nation, their brethren felt lowered in the eyes of their fellow-citizens in whatever city they dwelt, and in Alexandria they lost all hope of keeping their privileges; although the emperor refused to repeal the edict which granted them their citizenship, an edict to which they always appealed for protection, but often with very little success.

Josephus, Antiq. xii. 3.

(14) In taking leave of the historian Josephus, whose writings have been so often quoted in these pages, we must remark that, though his style is elegant, his narrative simple, and his manner earnest, yet his history cannot be read without some distrust. He was false to his country, to its religious laws, and to his foreign wife. He is sometimes biased by his wish to raise the character of his countrymen, at other times by his eagerness to excuse his own conduct. His history, however, throws great light upon the state of the Israelites at a time which is in the highest degree interesting to all Christians; and in his answer to Apion, who

had written against the Jews, we find some short but most valuable quotations from many writings which were then in the Alexandrian libraries but have been since lost, from Manetho, from Dius, from Menander of Ephesus, from Berosus, and from Hecatæus of Abdera. His life was chequered with many remarkable events, but with none to us more remarkable than his sailing with the Apostle Paul from Judæa to Italy, and being shipwrecked with him on the island of Malta. In Vitâ.

(15) Here perhaps we should mention the Wisdom of Solomon, a religious treatise in the Bible, which, because its author is unknown, has been placed among the Apocrypha. It is full of beautiful and devout thoughts, and reminds us of the writings of Philo and the Son of Sirach; but its language is much more like that of the New Testament. Nothing in it declares with certainty its author's time or place; but his opinions prove that he was a Jew of the Alexandrian school, and seemingly a convert to Christianity. He shows his Egyptian opinions by praising an unmarried life, and by saying that God did not create death; and further shows the place where he lived by blaming the Egyptians throughout without naming them. He wrote after the conquest of Judæa by Vespasian, as he says that God's people were crushed by their enemies. He hastily runs over many of the events in Jewish history without ever naming the persons. He calls Cain the unrighteous man; and Noah, Lot, Jacob, and Joseph are each in his turn called the righteous man. But the righteous man described at greatest length we must believe meant for the Founder of our religion. He was reproached with calling himself the Son of God; he was reviled and tortured, condemned to a disgraceful death, and told with a sneer when dying that God would save him if he were his son; and at the day of judgment he is to stand with boldness before his enemies. The writer makes a person of God's wisdom, who was present at the creation, and was an unspotted mirror of his power, the image of his goodness, and God himself loved her; and also of God's Word, by whom he made all things, and who afterwards leaped down from heaven out of the royal throne, as a

Ch. iii. 14. Ch. i. 13.

Ch. xv. 14. ch. x.

Ch. ii. iv. v.

Ch. ix. 9. ch. vii. 26.

Ch. ix. 1. ch. xviii. 15.

fierce man of war, to punish the Egyptians. And we may remark that when the word Trinity is first used by a Christian writer, Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, it is, as in this work, the Almighty, his Word, and his Wisdom. God's Wisdom is also made into a person in the gnostic treatise of Pistis-Sophia; it is her penitential hymns and heavenly teachings that the Saviour is employed to carry to mankind.

Lib. ii.

(16) The Alexandrians were sadly disappointed in Vespasian. They had been among the first to acknowledge him as emperor while his power was yet doubtful, and they looked for a sum of money as a largess; but to their sorrow he increased the taxes, and re-established some which had fallen into disuse. They had a joke against him, about his claiming from one of his friends the trifling debt of six oboli; and upon hearing of their witticisms he was so angry that he ordered this sum of six oboli to be levied as a poll-tax upon every man in the city, and he only let them off on his son Titus's begging for them. He went to Rome, carrying with him the nickname of Cybiosactes, *the scullion*, which the Alexandrians gave him for his stinginess and greediness, and which they had before given to Seleucus, who robbed the tomb of Alexander the Great of its golden sarcophagus.

Dion Cass. lib. lxvi.

Suetonius, Vit. Vespas.

(17) Titus saw the importance of pleasing the people; and his wish to humour their ancient prejudices, at the ceremony of consecrating a new bull as Apis, brought some blame upon him. He there, as became the occasion, wore the state crown, and dazzled the people of Memphis with his regal pomp; but while thus endeavouring to strengthen his father's throne, he was by some accused of grasping at it for himself.

Suetonius, Vit. Titi.

(18) The great temple of Kneph at Latopolis, which had been the work of many reigns and perhaps many centuries, was finished under Vespasian. It is a building worthy of the best times of Egyptian architecture. It has a grand portico, upheld by four rows of massive columns, with capitals in the form of papyrus flowers. On the ceiling is a zodiac, like that at Tentyra; and though many other kings' names are carved on the walls, that of Vespasian is in the

Wilkinson, Thebes.

Denon. pl. 52, 53, 54.

dedication over the entrance. The economist will perhaps ask from what source the oppressed Egyptians drew the wealth, and where they found the encouragement, necessary to finish these gigantic undertakings, which were begun in times of greater prosperity; but the only answer which we can give is, that the chief encouragement at all times to any great work is a strong sense of religious duty, and the only fund of wealth upon which men can draw for their generosity, or nations for their public works, is to be found in self denial.

(19) Of the reign of TITUS in Egypt (see Fig. 64) we find no trace beyond his coins struck each year at Alexandria, and his name carved on one or two temples which had been built in former reigns.

Zoega. A.D. 79.

Fig. 64.

(20) Of the reign of DOMITIAN (see Fig. 65) we learn something from the poet Juvenal, who then held a military post in the province; and he gives us a sad account of the state of lawlessness in which the troops lived under his command. All quarrels between soldiers and citizens were tried by the officers according to martial law; and justice was very far from being even-handed between the Roman and the poor Egyptian. No witness was bold enough to come forward and say anything against a soldier, while everybody was believed who spoke on his behalf. But as it was much the same at this time with the Roman army everywhere, perhaps Egypt may not have been worse off than the other provinces of the empire. Juvenal was at a great age when he was sent into Egypt; and he felt that the command of a cohort on the very borders of the desert was a cruel banishment from the literary society of Rome. His death in the camp was hastened by his wish to return home.

Satyr. xvi. A.D. 82.

Fig. 65.

Suetonius, in Vitâ.

(21) As what Juvenal chiefly aimed at in his writings was to lash the follies of the age, he of course found plenty of amusement in the superstitions and sacred animals of

Egypt. But he sometimes takes a poet's liberty, and when he tells us that man's was almost the only flesh that they ate without sinning, we need not believe him to the letter. He gives a lively picture of a fight which he saw between the citizens of two towns. The towns of Ombos and Tentyra, though about a hundred miles apart, had a long-standing quarrel about their gods. At Ombos they worshipped the crocodile and the crocodile-headed god Savak, while at Tentyra they worshipped the goddess Athor, and were celebrated for their skill in catching and killing crocodiles. So, taking advantage of a feast or holiday, as the people of Modena and Bologna did in the days of Tassoni, they marched out for a fight. The men of Ombos were beaten and put to flight; but one of them, stumbling as he ran away, was caught and torn to pieces, and, as Juvenal adds, eaten by the men of Tentyra. Their worshipping beasts, birds, and fishes, and even growing their gods in the garden, are pleasantly hit off by him; they left nothing, said he, without worship, but the goddess of chastity. The mother goddess, Isis, the queen of heaven, was the deity to whom they bowed with the most tender devotion, and to swear by Isis was their favourite oath; and hence the leek, in their own language named Isi, was no doubt the vegetable called a god by Juvenal.

Juvenal. Satyr. xv.

Pliny, lib. xix. 22.

(22) At the same time also the towns of Oxyrynchon and Cynopolis, in the Heptanomos, had a little civil war about the animals which they worshipped. At the former town they worshipped the Oxyrynchus fish, and made it into a mummy when it died (see Fig. 66).

Plutarch. De Iside, 72.

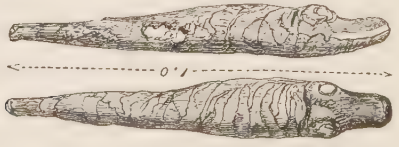


Fig. 66.

Somebody at Cynopolis was said to have caught an Oxyrynchus fish in the Nile and eaten it; and so the people of Oxyrynchon, in revenge, made an attack upon the dogs, the gods of Cynopolis. They caught a number of them killed

them in sacrifice to their offended fish-god, and eat them. The two parties then flew to arms and fought several battles; they sacked one another's cities in turns, and the war was not stopped till the Roman troops marched to the spot and punished them both.

(23) But we gain a more agreeable and most likely a more true notion of the mystical religion and philosophy of the Egyptians in these days from the serious inquiries of Plutarch, who, instead of looking for what he could laugh at, was only too ready to believe that he saw wisdom hidden under an allegory in all their superstitions. Many of the habits of the priests, such as shaving the whole body, wearing linen instead of cotton, and refusing some meats as impure, seem to have arisen from a love of cleanliness; their religion ordered what was useful. And it also forbade what was hurtful; so to stir the fire with a sword was displeasing to the gods, because it spoilt the temper of the steel. None but the vulgar now looked upon the animals and statues as gods; the priests believed that the unseen gods, who acted with one mind and with one providence, were the authors of all good; and though these, like the sun and moon, were called in each country by a different name, yet, like those luminaries, they were the same over all the world. Outward ceremonies in religion were no longer thought enough without a good life; and as the Greeks said that beard and cloak did not make a philosopher, so the Egyptians said that white linen and a tonsure would not make a follower of Isis. All the sacrifices to the gods had a secondary meaning, or at least the priests tried to join a moral aim to the outward act; as on the twentieth day of the month, when they ate honey and figs in honour of Thoth, they sang "Sweet is truth." The Egyptians, like most other Eastern polytheists, held the doctrine which was afterwards called Manicheism; they believed in a good and in a wicked god, who governed the world between them. Of these the former made himself threefold, because three is a perfect number, and they adopted into their religion that curious metaphysical opinion that everything divine is formed of three parts; and accordingly on the Theban monuments we often see the gods in groups of three. They worshipped Osiris, Isis, and Horus, under the form of a right-

De Iside et Osiride.

angled triangle, in which Horus was the side opposite to the right angle; and the little neatly-cut stones, found in the tombs, not strictly triangles, but shaped like the letter A (see Fig. 67), explain how the child Horus, though opposite to the right angle, was at the same time the shortest side. But the favourite part of their mythology was the lamentation of Isis for the death of her husband Osiris. He was killed by the wicked Typhon, who scattered his limbs over the earth; and they were picked up by Isis, who put them together and buried them. Horus then undertook to avenge his father's death, and conquered Typhon and put him to flight. The latter, the wicked Typhon, had two sons named Hierosolymus and Judæus after the enemies of the nation. All this was now supposed to cover much hidden wisdom. But we do not recognise the story on the most ancient monuments of the Thebaid, and it was most likely the growth of modern times, and perhaps of the province of Lower Egypt; but, at any rate, it was old enough to give birth to the more elegant Greek story of Venus lamenting for the death of Adonis.

Fig. 67.

(24) By another change the god Horus, who used to be a crowned king of manly stature, was now a child holding a finger to his mouth, and thereby marking that he had not

Fig. 68.

Fig. 69.

yet learned to talk (see Fig. 68). The Romans, who did not understand this Egyptian symbol for youthfulness,

thought that in this character he was commanding silence; and they gave the name of Harpocrates, *Horus the child*, to a god of silence. Horus was also often placed as a child in the arms of his mother Isis; and thus by the loving nature of the group were awakened the more tender feelings of the worshipper (see Fig. 69). The Egyptians, like the Greeks, had always been loud in declaring that they were beloved by their gods; but they received their favours with little gratitude, and hardly professed that they felt any love towards the gods in return. But after the time of the Christian era, we meet with more kindly feelings even among the Pagans. We find from the Greek names of persons that they at least had begun to think their gods deserving of love; and in this group of the mother and child, such a favourite also in Christian art, we see in what direction these more kindly feelings found an entrance into the Egyptian religion. As fast as opinion was raising the great god Serapis above his fellows, and making the wrathful judge into the ruler of the world, so fast was the same opinion creating for itself a harbour of refuge in the child Horus and its mother Isis. We see on a votive tablet the emperor on his knees, worshipping not as of old the great gods Amun-Ra, or Knef, but the mother-goddess Athor and her child Chonso.

Egypt. Inscript. 119.

(25) The deep earnestness of the Egyptians in the belief of their own religion was the chief cause of its being adopted by others. We are more ready to be persuaded when the speaker is himself in earnest. The Greeks had borrowed much from it. Though in Rome it had been forbidden by law, it was much cultivated there in private; and the engraved rings on the fingers of the wealthy Romans, which bore the figures of Harpocrates and other Egyptian gods (see Fig. 70), easily escaped the notice of the magistrate. But the superstitious Domitian, who was in the habit of consulting astrologers and Chaldean fortune-tellers, allowed the Egyptian worship. He

Pliny, lib. xxxiii. 12.

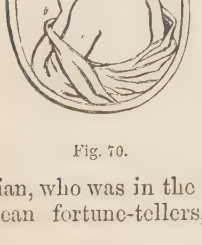


Fig. 70.

Suetonius, in Vitâ.

built at Rome a temple to Isis, and another to Serapis; and such was the eagerness of the citizens for pictures of the mother-goddess with her child in her arms, that, according to Juvenal, the Roman painters all lived upon the goddess Isis. For her temple in the Campus Martius, holy water was even brought from the Nile to purify the building and the votaries; and a regular college of priests was maintained there by their zeal and at their cost, with a splendour worthy of the Roman capital. Domitian, also, was somewhat of a scholar, and he sent to Alexandria for copies of their books, to restore the public library at Rome, which had been lately burnt; while his garden on the banks of the Tyber was richer in the Egyptian winter-blowing rose than even the gardens of Memphis and Alexandria.

Cassiodori Chronicon.

Sat. xii. 28. Sat. vi. 527.

Apuleius, Metam. xi.

Suetonius, in Vitâ.

Martial. lib. i. 26.

(26) During this century the coinage continues one of the subjects of chief interest to the antiquary (see Fig. 71). In the eleventh year of his reign, when Domitian took upon himself the tribunitian power at Rome for a second period of ten years, the event was celebrated in

A.D. 92.

Fig. 71.

Alexandria with a triumphal procession and games in the hippodrome, of all which we see clear traces on the Egyptian coins. The Egyptian coinage of that year surpasses that of all former years in beauty and variety.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REIGNS OF NERVA, TRAJAN, HADRIAN, AND THE TWO ANTONINES. A.D. 97—181.

(1) The coinage is almost the only trace of Nerva having reigned in Egypt; but it is at the same time enough to prove the mildness of his government. The Jews, who by their own law were of old required to pay half a shekel, or a didrachm, to the service of their temple, had on their conquest been made to pay that sum as a yearly tribute to the Ptolemies and afterwards to the emperors. It was a poll-tax levied on every Jew throughout the empire. But Nerva had the humanity to relieve them from this insulting tribute, and well did he deserve the honour of having it recorded on his coins (see Fig. 72).

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. Exodus, xxx. 13.

Matthew, xvii. 24.

Mionnet, Med. Rom.

Fig. 72.

(2) The coinage of the eleventh year of his successor Trajan (see Fig. 73) is very remarkable for its beauty and variety, even more so than that of the eleventh year of Domitian. The coins have hitherto proclaimed the conquests of the emperors, the games, the bountiful overflow of the Nile, and sometimes the worship of Serapis; but we now enter upon the most brilliant period of the Egyptian coinage, and find a rich variety of fables taken both from Egyptian and Greek mythology. The coins of Rome in this and the following reigns show the

A.D. 108. Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

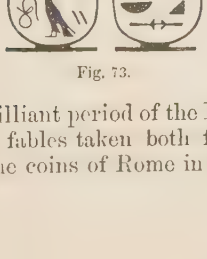


Fig. 73.

wealth, good taste, and learning of the nation, but they are even passed by the coins of Egypt (see Fig. 74). While history is nearly silent, and the buildings and other proofs of Roman

Fig. 74.

good government have perished, the coins alone are quite enough to prove the well-being of the people. Among the Egyptian coins those of Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines

equal in number those of all the other emperors together, while in beauty they far surpass them. They are mostly of copper, of a small size, and thick, weighing about one hundred and ten grains, and some larger of two hundred and twenty grains; the silver coins are less common, and of mixed metal.

(3) Though the Romans, while admiring and copying everything that was Greek, affected to look upon the Egyptians as savages, who were only known to be human beings by their having a voice, still the Egyptian physicians were held by them in the highest repute. The more wealthy Romans often sailed to Alexandria for the benefit of their advice. Pliny the elder, however, thought that of the invalids who went to Egypt for their health, more were cured by the sea-voyage than by the physicians on their arrival. One of Cicero's physicians was an Egyptian. Pliny the younger repaid his Egyptian oculist Harpocrates by getting a rescript from the emperor to make him a Roman citizen. But the statesman did not know under what harsh laws his friend was born, for the grant was void in the case of an Egyptian, the emperor's rescript was bad, as being against the law; and Pliny had again to beg the greater favour that the Egyptian might first be made a citizen of Alexandria, without which the former favour was useless. Thus, even in Alexandria, a conquered province governed by the despotic will of a military emperor, there were still some laws or principles which the emperor found it not easy to break. The courts of justice, those to whom the edicts were addressed, and by whom they were to be explained and carried into effect, claimed a power in some cases above the emperor; and the first article in the Roman code was that an imperial rescript, by whomsoever or howsoever obtained, was void if it was against the law. Thus, as the lawyers and magistrates formed part of the body of citizens, the Alexandrians had so far a share in governing themselves; but this the Egyptians lost by being under Greek magistrates.

Petronius, Anthologia Latina.

Lib. xxxi. 33.

Epist. ad. Famil. xvi. 15.

Plin. Epist. x. 22.

Codex Theodos.

(4) Trajan always kept in the public granaries of Rome a supply of Egyptian corn equal to seven times the

canon, or yearly gift to the poor citizens; and in this prudent course he was followed by all his successors, till the store was squandered by the worthless Elagabalus. One year, when the Nile did not rise to its usual height, and much of the corn-land of the Delta, instead of being moistened by its waters and enriched by its mud, was left a dry sandy plain, the granaries of Rome were unlocked to feed the city of Alexandria. The Alexandrians then saw the unusual sight of ships unloading their cargoes of wheat in their harbour; and the Romans boasted that they took the Egyptian tribute in corn, not because they could not feed themselves, but because the Egyptians had nothing else to send them.

Lampridius, Vit. Heliog. Pliny, Panegyr.

(5) Alexandria under the Romans was still the centre of the trading world, not only having its own great trade in corn, but being the port through which the trade of India and Arabia passed to Europe, and at which the Syrian vessels touched in their way to Italy. The harbour was crowded with masts and strange prows and uncouth sails, and the quays always busy with loading and unloading; while in the streets might be seen men of all languages and all dresses — copper-coloured Egyptians, swarthy Jews, lively bustling Greeks, and haughty Italians, with Asiatics from the neighbouring coasts of Syria and Cilicia, and even dark Ethiopians, painted Arabs, Bactrians, Scythians, Persians, and Indians, all gay with their national costumes. Alexandria was a spot in which Europe met Asia, and each wondered at the strangeness of the other.

Dion Chrysost. ad Alexandr.

(6) Of the Alexandrians themselves we receive a very unfavourable account from their countryman Dion Chrysostome. With their wealth, they had those vices which usually follow or cause the loss of national independence. They were eager after nothing but food and horse-races, those never-failing bribes for which the idle of every country will sell all that a man should hold most dear. They were grave and quiet in their sacrifices and listless in business, but in the theatre or in the stadium men, women, and children were alike heated into passion, and overcome with eagerness and warmth of feeling. A scurrilous song or a horse-race would so rouse them into a quarrel that they could not hear for their own noise, nor see for the dust raised by their own

bustle in the hippodrome; while all those acts of their rulers which in a more wholesome state of society would have called for notice passed by unheeded. They cared more for the tumble of a favourite charioteer than for the sinking state of the nation. The ready employment of ridicule in the place of argument, of wit instead of graver reason, of nicknames as their most powerful weapon, was one of the worst points in the Alexandrian character; and their history proves the truth of the Wise Man's remark, who, when he tells us which characters are most formed by nature to undermine the foundations of society and overturn the state, does not mention the proud or the cruel, the childish or the rash, the lustful or the wicked, but the mockers and scorners. Frankness and manliness are hardly to be looked for under a despotic government where men are forbidden to speak their minds openly; and the Alexandrians made use of such checks upon their rulers as the law allowed them. They lived under an absolute monarchy tempered only by ridicule. Though their city was four hundred years old, they were still colonists and without a mother-country. They had very little faith in anything great or good, whether human or divine. They had few cherished prejudices, no honoured traditions, sadly little love of fame, and they wrote no histories. But in luxury and delicacy they set the fashion to their conquerors. The wealthy Alexandrian walked about Rome in a scarlet robe, in summer fanning himself with gold, and displaying on his fingers rings carefully suited to the season; as his hands were too delicate to carry his heavier jewels in the warm weather. He taught the Romans nothing more valuable than a game of romps, such, for example, as the Basilinda, in which the company amuse themselves with drawing lots to settle who shall act as king and queen over the rest for the evening. Many admired, though some called him a reptile spawned out of the Nile's mud. At the supper-tables of the rich the Alexandrian singing-boys were much valued; the smart young Roman walked along the Via Sacra humming an Alexandrian tune; the favourite comic actor, the delight of the city, whose jokes set the theatre in a roar, was an

Juvenal. Sat. i. 26.

Julius Pollux, lib. ix. 7. Tacitus, Ann. xiii. 15.

Statius, Sylv. v. Martial. vi. ii. 24. ix. 34.

Alexandrian; the Retiarius, who, with no weapon but a net, fought against an armed gladiator in the Roman forum, and came off conqueror in twenty-six such battles, was an Alexandrian; and no breed of fighting-cocks was thought equal to those reared in Alexandria.

Inscript. Gruter, cccxxxiii. 8.

Geoponica, lib. xiv. 7.

(7) In the reign of Augustus the Roman generals had been defeated in their attacks on Arabia; but under Trajan, when the Romans were masters of all the countries which surround Arabia Nabatæa, and when Egypt was so far quiet that the legions could be withdrawn without danger to the provinces, the Arabs could

Ammianus, lib. xiv.

Fig. 75.

hold out no longer, and the rocky fastness of Petra was forced to receive a Roman garrison. The event was as usual commemorated on the coins of Rome; and for the next four

hundred years that remarkable Arab city formed part of the Roman empire; and Europeans now travelling through the desert from Mount Sinai to Jerusalem are agreeably surprised at coming upon temples, carved out of the solid rock, ornamented with Corinthian columns of the age of the Antonines (see Fig. 75). Laborde's Travels.

(8) In the twelfth year of this reign, when Lucius Sulpicius Simius was prefect, some additions which had been made to the temple at Panopolis in the Thebaid, were dedicated in the name of the emperor; and in the nineteenth year, when Marcus Rutilius Lupus was prefect, a new portico in the Oasis of Thebes was Inscript. Letronne.

Fig. 76.

Fig. 77.

in the same manner dedicated to Serapis and Isis. A small temple which had been before built at Dendera, near the great temple of Athor or Venus, was in the first year of this reign dedicated to the Empress Plotina, under the name of the great goddess the younger Venus. In the silence of the historians, the coins would lead us to think that Trajan visited Alexandria in the fourteenth year of his reign, when, after his conquest of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, they represent his approach in a chariot drawn by elephants (Fig. 76); at any rate, his departure from the city is certainly marked on the coins of his sixteenth year, when the goddess Isis holds up a sail which is filled by wind blowing away from the lighthouse on the island of Pharos (see Fig. 77). Inscript. Boeckh. 4716. c. Hobler's Rome A.D. 111. A.D. 113.

(9) The canal from the Nile near Bubastis to the Bitter

Lakes, which had been first made by Necho, had been either finished or a second time made by Philadelphus; and in this reign that great undertaking was again renewed. But the stream of the Nile was deserting the Bubastite branch, which was less navigable than formerly; and the engineers now changed the greater part of the canal's bed. They thought it wiser to bring the water from a higher part of the Nile, so that the current in the canal might run into the Red Sea instead of out, and its waters might still be fresh and useful to agriculture. It now began at Babylon, opposite Memphis, and, passing by Heliopolis, Scenæ Veteranorum, Heroopolis, and Serapion, joined the Upper Bitter Lake, and thence entered the Red Sea at a town which, taking its name from the locks, was called Clismon, about ten miles to the south of Arsinoë. This latter town was no longer a port, having been separated from the sea by the continual advance of the sands. We have no knowledge of how long the care of the imperial prefects kept this new canal open and in use. The encroachment of the sands would fill it up whenever it was neglected; it was perhaps one of the first of the Roman works that went to decay; and, when we find the Christian pilgrims sailing along it seven centuries later, in their way from England to the Holy Sepulchre, it had been again opened by the Mahomedan conquerors of Egypt.

Ptolemæi Geograph.

Diculfus, Mensura Orbis, vi.

(10) As Alexandria has been the birthplace of many forgeries in religious literature, we readily give it credit for others. Here most likely were written the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the work of a Jewish convert to Christianity. It pretends to be an account of the deaths of the twelve sons of Jacob, with the prophetic speeches which they made to their children on their death-beds. Trajan, in the fourth year of his reign, about thirty-four years after the destruction of Jerusalem, had promised Joshua, the son of Annaniah, that the Jews should have leave to return to the holy city and rebuild the Temple; and this, as we shall see, fixes the time when this work was written. The patriarch Reuben foretells the coming of the high-priest Christ. Levi also, quoting from the book of Enoch, foretells the coming of a man in the power of the Most High to renew the Law; his being called an impostor,

D. Ganz, Zemach David.

his death, and resurrection; and he makes the seventy weeks of the book of Daniel end with the destruction of the Temple. He then continues his prophecy through the space of seven weeks or forty-nine years more, each of which weeks is to be the reign of a new high-priest. In the fifth week, under the fifth high-priest, that is, before the ninth year of Trajan's reign, the Jews are to return into the land of their desolation, and to rebuild the house of the Lord; and the failure in this prophecy fixes the date of the writing. In the seventh week there are to be wicked idolatrous priests, after which the priesthood is to be at an end, and is to be followed by the reign of God upon earth. Judah and Nephthalim also foretell the glory of Israel; but it is not clear whether they point to Jesus, or to the re-establishment of the Jews as a nation in their own country. This great and glorious event, whether it was to be the second coming of Christ and the end of the world, as many of the Christians thought, or whether it was to be the restoration of the sceptre to Judah and the re-establishment of the Jewish kingdom, was looked forward to as an event close at hand, and it raised the minds of the Jews into a fervour of religious enthusiasm. As the wished-for time drew near, the end of the seven great weeks from the destruction of the Temple, all the eastern provinces of the Roman empire were disturbed by the rebellious rising of the Jews.

(11) Most likely at this time the poet Ezekiel wrote his Greek tragedy of the Departure from Egypt, which would seem meant to encourage his countrymen to march a second time through the desert from Egypt to the promised land. In this poem the chief speakers are God and Moses; but we now possess only a few dialogues of it, in one of which an angel boastfully describes the triumphant march of the Israelites and the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

(12) Moved by these writings, or rather by the religious enthusiasm which gave birth to the writings, the Jews of Egypt, in the eighteenth year of this reign, were again roused into a quarrel with their Greek fellow-citizens; and in the next year, the last of the reign, they rose against their Roman governors in open rebellion, and they were not put down till the prefect Lupus had brought his forces against them.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. 2.

Orosius, lib. vii. 12.

A.D. 116.

At first the Jews were successful, more particularly in the villages; and the Greeks fled to Alexandria, where they were the stronger, and there they slew the Jews in revenge, though not till after many obstinate and bloody battles in the streets. After this the Jews of Cyrene marched through the desert into Egypt, under the command of Lucuas, to help their brethren; and the rebellion took the regular form of a civil war, with all its usual horrors. The emperor sent against the Jews an army, followed by a fleet, which, after numerous skirmishes and battles, routed them with great slaughter, and drove numbers of them back into the desert, from whence they harassed the villages as robbers.

(13) By these unsuccessful appeals to force, the Jews lost all right to those privileges of citizenship which they always claimed, and which had been granted by the emperors, though usually refused by the Alexandrians. Henceforth they were lowered to the rank of Egyptians, and nothing but the emperor's edict could raise a Jew or an Egyptian to the rank of an Alexandrian. The overthrow of Jerusalem had sealed the fate of the Jews in every country where they dwelt in their dispersion; their second temple at Onion in the Delta was also closed, and their despair and disappointment at the failure of these hopes seem in many cases to have turned their minds to the Christian view of the Old Testament prophecies; henceforth, says Eusebius, the Jews embraced the Christian religion more readily and in greater numbers. It was probably at this time that the Jews of Egypt were again made to pay the poll-tax for leave to worship the God of their fathers, from which they had been relieved by Nerva.

Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. 35.

(14) In the sixth year of the reign of HADRIAN (see Fig. 78), Egypt was honoured by a visit from the emperor, who, with a restless activity joined to a praiseworthy love of knowledge, had already run over a large part of his dominions. After marching on foot over the snows of Scotland, he came to expose himself bareheaded to the scorching sun of the Thebaid. He was led to Egypt at that time by some riots of a character more serious than usual, which had arisen between two cities, probably Memphis and Heliopolis, about a bull,

A.D. 122.

Spartianus, Vit. Hadr.

as to whether it was to be Apis or Mnevis. Egypt had been for some years without a sacred bull; and when at length the priests found one, marked with the wished-for spots, the inhabitants of those two cities flew to arms, and the peace of the province was disturbed by their religious zeal, each claiming the bull as their own. Hadrian was accompanied by his favourite, the beautiful Antinous, who drowned himself in the Nile during their journey towards Thebes. It would seem that the emperor had been consulting with the Egyptian astrologers as to his future fate and the welfare of the empire; and that the oracle had declared that the loss of what he then held most dear was

Fig. 78.

Dion Cass. lib. lxix.

Fig. 79.

necessary to his future happiness; and that on this Antinous had generously devoted his own life in the service of his master, and thrown himself into the Nile near the village of

Besa. The emperor, to show his gratitude, built a large city near the spot, which like Alexandria was to be governed by Greek laws; he ornamented it with temples, and named it Antinoopolis, in honour of the lost favourite. It stood on the east bank of the Nile, opposite to Hermopolis. Travellers still trace the walls of the baths, a theatre, a triumphal arch (see Fig. 79), and a hippodrome, while the wide space covered by ruins and the number of Corinthian columns prove the magnificence and taste of the founder. Here divine honours were regularly paid to the favourite in his own temple, as to one of the gods of the country: numerous statues of him were made with Greek skill, though after the old Egyptian model; chariot-races and other public games were every year celebrated to his memory in the hippodrome and theatre, to the surprise of the people of Upper Egypt, who were unused to that method of honouring the dead; and in the seventh and following years coins were struck to his honour in Alexandria, under the name of the hero Antinous (see Fig. 80). The country round the new

Wilkinson, Thebes.

Origen. in Celsum, iii. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iv. 8.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. Ptolemaï Geograph.

Fig. 80.

city was then made into a nome under the name of Antinoites; and the province of the Heptanomis, below Lycopolis but above the Delta, which took its name from its seven nomes, henceforward held eight.

(15) In Alexandria the emperor mixed freely with the professors of the Museum, asking them questions and answering theirs in return; and he dropped his tear of pity on the tomb of the great Pompey, in the

Spartianus, Vit. Hadr.

form of a Greek epigram, though with very little point. He laid out large sums of money in building and ornamenting the city, and the Alexandrians were much pleased with his behaviour. Among other honours that they paid him, they changed the name of the month December, calling it the month Hadrian; but as they were not followed by the rest of the empire the name soon went out of use. The emperor's patronage of philosophy was rather at the cost of the Alexandrian Museum, for he enrolled among its paid professors men who were teaching from school to school in Italy and Asia Minor. Thus, Polemon of Laodicea, who taught oratory and philosophy at Rome, Laodicea, and Smyrna, and had the right of a free passage for himself and his servants in any of the public ships whenever he chose to move from city to city for the purposes of study or teaching, had at the same time a salary from the Alexandrian Museum. Dionysius of Miletus also received his salary as a professor in the Museum while teaching philosophy and the art of memory at Miletus and Ephesus. Pancrates, the Alexandrian poet, gained his salary in the Museum by the easy task of a little flattery. On Hadrian's return to Alexandria from the Thebaid, the poet presented to him a rose-coloured lotus, a flower well known in India, though less common in Egypt than either the blue or white lotus, and assured him that it had sprung out of the blood of the lion slain by his royal javelin at a lion-hunt in Libya. The emperor was pleased with the compliment, and gave him a place in the Museum; and Pancrates in return named the plant the lotus of Antinous. This story could hardly have been known to Linnæus, or, when that great naturalist was giving names to the vegetable world, his classical taste, which has shown itself so playfully in many other cases, would most likely have led him to name this plant not the *Nymphæa Indica*, but the *Nymphæa Antinoi* (see Fig. 81). Pancrates was a warm admirer of the mystical opinions of the Egyptians, which were then coming into note in Alexandria. He was said to have lived under ground in holy solitude or converse with the gods for twenty-three years, and during that time to have been taught magic by

Anthologia Græca, i. 51.
Cassiodori Chronicon
Young's Hierogl. pl. 52.
Philostrat. Vit. Soph.
Athenæus, lib. xv.
Lucian. Philopseud.

the goddess Isis, and thus to have gained the power of working miracles. He learned to call upon the queen of darkness by her Egyptian name Hecate, *the sorceress*, and when driving out evil spirits to speak to them in the Egyptian language. Whether these Greek students of the Eastern mysticism were deceivers or deceived, whether they were led by a love of notoriety or of knowledge, is in most cases doubtful; but they were surrounded by a crowd of credulous admirers, who formed a strange contrast with the sceptics and critics of the Museum.

Fig. 81.

(16) Among the Alexandrian grammarians of this reign were Valerius Pollio, who wrote a lexicon of the words peculiar to the Attic dialect; Valerius Diodorus his son, and Ptolemy Chennus, the father of Hephæstion, who wrote a work called the Sphinx, and of whose writings we still possess a few fragments in the collections of Photius. The grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus, so called perhaps from a moroseness of manner, wrote largely on rhetoric, on the Greek dialects, on accents, prosody, and on other branches of grammar. In the

Suidas and Photius.

Suidas.

few pages that remain of his numerous writings, we trace the love of the marvellous which was then growing among some of the philosophers. He tells us many remarkable stories, which he collected rather as a judicious inquirer than as a credulous believer; such as of second sight; an account of a lad who fell asleep in the field while watching his sheep, and then slept for fifty-seven years, and awoke to wonder at the strangeness of the changes that had taken place in the meanwhile; and of a man who after death used from time to time to leave his body, and wander over the earth as a spirit, till his wife, tired of his coming back again so often, put a stop to it by having the mummy burnt. He gives us for the first time Eastern tales in a Greek dress, and we thus learn the source from which Europe gained much of its literature in the middle ages. Though the more valuable writings by Apollonius are lost, we may trust to the praises of the grammarian Priscian, who thought him unequalled for skill and patience in unravelling a grammatical difficulty. But the Alexandrian author of greatest note was the historian Appian, who tells us that he had spent some years in Rome practising as a lawyer, and returned to Egypt on being appointed to a high post in the government of his native city. There he wrote his Roman history. It is an unornamented faithful narrative, divided according to the nations with whom the Romans fought, and particularly valued for the writer's knowledge of military tactics. It is indeed rather a history of the Roman wars and conquests than a history of the republic.

Lib. i. præf.

Procmium.

(17) In this reign the Jews, forgetful of what they had just suffered under Trajan, again rose against the power of Rome; and, when Judæa rebelled against its prefect Tinnius Rufus, a little army of Jews marched out of Egypt and Libya, to help their brethren and to free the holy land. But they were everywhere routed and put down with a slaughter equalled to their resolute struggles.

Orosius, lib. vii. 13. G. Syncellus. A.D. 130.

(18) Travellers, on reaching a distant point of a journey or on viewing any remarkable object of their curiosity, have at all times been fond of carving or scribbling their names on the spot, to boast of their prowess to after-comers; and never had any place been more favoured with memorials of

this kind than the great statue of Amunothph at Thebes. This colossal statue, fifty-three feet high, was famed, as long as the Egyptian priesthood lasted, for sending forth musical sounds every morning at sunrise, when first touched by the sun's rays; and no traveller ever visited Thebes without listening for these remarkable notes. The journey through Upper Egypt was at this time perfectly open and safe; and the legs and feet of the statue are covered with names, and inscriptions in prose and verse, of travellers who had visited it at sunrise during the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines. From these curious memorials we learn the names of Egyptian prefects otherwise unknown to history; and from the same we learn that Hadrian visited Thebes a second time with his Queen Sabina, in the fifteenth year of his reign; and his triumphal entry into Alexandria is marked on the coins of that year. When the empress first visited the statue she was disappointed at not hearing the musical sounds; but, on her hinting threats of the emperor's displeasure, her curiosity was gratified on the following morning. This gigantic statue of hard gritstone had formerly been broken in half across the waist, and the upper part thrown to the ground, either by the shock of an earthquake or the ruder shock of Persian zeal against the Egyptian religion; and for some centuries past the musical notes had issued from the broken fragments. Such was its fallen state when the Empress Sabina saw it, and when Strabo and Juvenal and Pausanias listened to its sounds; and it was not till after the reign of Hadrian that it was again raised upright like its companion, as our travellers now see it (see Fig. 82).

Inscript. Transact. R. Soc. Lit. vol. ii. 29.

A.D. 131.

Lib. xvii. Sat. xv. Lib. i. 42.

(19) Among the attendants of Queen Sabina, was a lady of the name of Julia Balbilla, a daughter of Claudius Balbillus, the prefect of Egypt in the reign of Nero. She was a Greek by birth, though bearing a Roman name, and she has left us several short poems carved on the foot of the musical statue, which record Hadrian and his queen's visit to Thebes, and her own descent from Antiochus king of Commagena. She wrote with marked Æolic peculiarities; among which her use of the F or Digamma is worthy of note. Of Hadrian's visit to Egypt we have a curious representation on the mosaic

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4725, 4730.

Barthelemy, Mosaïque de Palestine.

Fig. 82.—The two Colossal Statues in the Plain of Thebes.

found at Prænestc in Italy. It gives us a bird's-eye view of the whole country. The emperor's galley with numerous rowers is on the Nile, with the crocodile, the river-horse and lotus flowers in the water, which is then overflowing the fields. The emperor has landed, and is received under a tent near a temple, in Lower Egypt. Over the entrance to another temple in Middle Egypt is fixed the imperial Roman eagle. This may be at Phylake, where a body of troops was stationed. In front of this are several Egyptian gods. A third temple has two obelisks in front of it, and is marked as that at Syene at the tropic, by a well near to it, of course the famed well down which the sun throws no shadow on midsummer day (see Fig. 83). Beyond Syene we have the unknown country

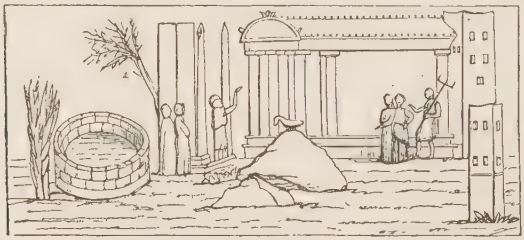


Fig. 83.

of Ethiopia, marked by the camelopard, the lynx, the rhinoceros, with the sphinx, and other fabulous animals. This mode of forming a picture by putting together numerous small coloured stones had long been known in Egypt, and was by Hadrian introduced into Italy. It may have received its name mosaic work from the Museum of Alexandria.

(20) From this second visit, and a longer acquaintance, Hadrian seems to have formed a very poor opinion of the Egyptians and Egyptian Jews; and the following curious letter to his friend Servianus throws much light upon their religion as worshippers of Serapis, at the same time that it proves how numerous the Christians had become in Alexandria, even within seventy years of the evangelist Mark beginning to preach there.

Vopiscus, Vit. Saturnini.

"Hadrian Augustus to Servianus the consul, greeting;

"As for Egypt, which you were praising to me, dearest

Servianus, I have found its people wholly light, wavering, and flying after every breath of a report. Those who worship Serapis are Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are devoted to Serapis. There is no ruler of a Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, who is not a mathematician, an augur, and a soothsayer. The very patriarch himself, when he came into Egypt, was by some said to worship Serapis, and by others to worship Christ. As a race of men they are seditious, vain, and spiteful; as a body, wealthy and prosperous, of whom nobody lives in idleness. Some blow glass, some make paper, and others linen. There is work for the lame, and work for the blind; even those who have lost the use of their hands do not live in idleness. Their one god is nothing; Christians, Jews, and all nations worship him. I wish this body of men was better behaved, and worthy of their number; for as for that they ought to hold the chief place in Egypt. I have granted everything unto them; I have restored their old privileges, and have made them grateful by adding new ones." A.D. 134.

Fig. 84.

The queen's departure is well marked on the Alexandrian coins of the sixteenth year of Hadrian's reign, where she is seated on a couch in her galley (see Fig. 84).

(21) Among the crowd of gods that had formerly been worshipped in Egypt, Serapis had latterly been rising above the rest. He was the god of the dead, who in the next world was to reward the good and punish the wicked; and in the growing worship of this one all-seeing judge of men's actions we cannot but trace the downfall of some of the evils of polytheism. A plurality in unity was another method now used to explain away the polytheism. The oracle when consulted about the divine nature had answered, "I am Ra, and Horus, and Osiris" (see Fig. 85); or, as the Greeks translated it, Apollo, and Lord, and Bacchus; "I rule the hours and the seasons, the wind and the storms, the day and the night; I am king of the Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. iii. 15.

stars and myself an immortal fire." Hence arose the opinion which seems to have been given to Hadrian, that the Egyptians had only one god, and his mistake in thinking that the worshippers of Serapis were Christians. The emperor indeed himself, though a polytheist, was very little of an idolater; for though he wished to add Christ to the number of the Roman gods, he on the other hand ordered that the temples built in his reign should have no images for worship; and in after ages it was common to call all temples without statues Hadrian's temples. But there were other and stronger reasons for Hadrian's classing the Christians with the Egyptian astrologers. A Christian heresy was then rising into notice in Egypt in that very form, taking its opinions from the philosophy on which it was engrafted. Before Christianity was preached in Alexandria there were already three religions or forms of philosophy, belonging to the three races of men who peopled that busy city; first, the Greek philosophy, which was chiefly Platonism; secondly, the Eastern mysticism of the Egyptians; and lastly, the religion of the Jews. These were often more or less mixed, as we see them all united in the works of Philo-Judæus; and in the writings of the early converts we usually find Christianity clothed in one or other of these forms, according to the opinions held by the writers before their conversion. The first Christian teachers, the apostolic fathers, as they are called, because they had been hearers of the apostles themselves, were mostly Jews; but among the Egyptians and Greeks of Alexandria their religion lost much of its purely moral caste, and became, with the former, an astrological mysticism, and with the latter an abstract speculative theology. It is of the Egyptian Jews that Hadrian speaks in his letter just quoted; many of them had been already converted to Christianity, and their religion had taken the form of Gnosticism.

Lampridius Vit. Alexandri.

Fig. 85.

(22) Gnosticism, or Science, for the name means no more, was not then new in Alexandria, nor were its followers

originally Christians. It was the proud name claimed for their opinions by those who studied the eastern philosophy of the Magi; and Egypt seems to have been as much its native soil as India. Simon Magus, who, distrusting his own art of sorcery, wished to buy from the apostles the power of working miracles, is supposed to have been a Gnostic; the Nicolaitans spoken of in the Book of Revelation were a sect of Gnostics; and it was against the antitheses of Gnosticism, or the "oppositions of science falsely so called," that the Apostle Paul warned Timothy. Cerinthus was one of the first who tried to engraft Christianity on these opinions. He had studied many years in Alexandria, but it was in Asia Minor that he gathered round himself a sect of followers. The Gnostics taught that there were several spiritual powers or beings proceeding out of the everlasting God, to whom he had trusted the creation and government of the world, and whom they called *æons*, or ages, and Cerinthus said that one of these *æons*, named Christ, dwelt in the body of Jesus. Cerinthus also taught his followers that the looked-for kingdom of Christ was to be an earthly kingdom, and he was by many believed to be the author of the Book of Revelation, though there seems to be no other ground for thinking so beyond the opinions taught in that remarkable work.

Acts, viii.

Epiphanius, Hæres. 24.

1 Tim. vi. 20.

Theodoret. Hæret. ii.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. 25.

(23) But Basilides was the founder of the Egyptian sect of Christian Gnostics. By his learning and ability he raised himself and his followers into importance, and they would seem to be the persons spoken of by Hadrian. Basilides dwelt sometimes at Aphroditopolis, and sometimes in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, but not in the capital itself; and he counted many more Egyptians than Greeks among his followers. He taught a religious fatalism, and the doctrine of election, that nobody could believe in Christianity unless he had been elected to salvation, and that the elect could not fall by sin. He held that matter was itself eternal like the deity; and, making the divine attributes into so many persons, taught that the deity had begotten out of himself seven *æons* or natures (perhaps the seven spirits of God men-

Euselbii Chronicon.

Epiphanius, Hæres. 24.

Clemens, Strom. i. ii.

Theodoret. Hæret.

Irenæus, adv. Hæres.

Chap. vi. 5.

tioned in the Book of Revelation), namely, Mind, Word, Prudence, Wisdom, Power, Justice, and Peace; which eight persons together formed the one ever-blessed Ogdoad. Puzzled, as so many other inquirers have been, with the origin of evil, and with the difficulty of believing that the Giver of all good was himself the author of sin, Basilides made a second god of the devil or the personification of sin. He set a great value on mathematics; sometimes inquiring into Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, and the number of months in our Lord's ministry; at other times naming God the Abraxas, because the letters of that word are the numerals for three hundred and sixty-five, the number of days in a year. The Gnostics endeavoured to blend these and more mischievous opinions with Christianity. They show that the study of the exact sciences will not save men from the wildest fancies in moral science or the most baseless opinions in religion. We still possess the traces of their astrology in a number of amulets and engraved gems, with the word *Abrasax* and other emblems of their superstition, which they kept as charms against diseases and evil spirits. The word ABRA-SAX may be translated *Hurt me not*. To their mystic rites we may trace many of the reproaches thrown upon our religion, such as that the Christians worshipped the head of an ass, using the animal's Coptic name *Eeo*, to represent the name of Iao, or Jehovah (see Fig. 86). To the same source we may also trace some of the peculiarities of the Christian fathers, such as St. Ambrose calling Jesus "the good scarabæus, who rolled up before him the hitherto unshapen mud of our bodies;" a thought which seems to have been borrowed as much from the hieroglyphics as from the insect's habits; and perhaps from the Egyptian priests in some cases using the scarabæus to denote the god Horus-Ra, and sometimes the word *only-begotten* (see Fig. 87). We trace this thought on the coins and Gnostic gems, where we see a winged griffin rolling

Macarii Abraxas.

Minutius Felix.

In Luc. x. 113.

Egypt. Inscript. pl. 29.

Horapollo, lib. i. 10.

Fig. 86.

Fig. 87.

before him a wheel, the emblem of eternity (see Fig. 71). He may be meant perhaps for the Saviour. On one engraved gem he sits like a conqueror on horseback, trampling under foot the serpent of old, the spirit of sin and death. His horse is in the form of a ram, with an eagle's head and the crowned asp or basilisk for its tail. Before him stands the figure of victory giving him a crown; above are written the words Alpha and Omega, and below perhaps the word Jehovah (see Fig. 88).

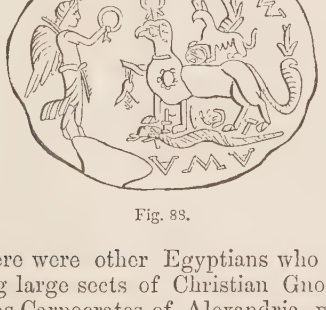


Fig. 88.

(24) But there were other Egyptians who rivalled Basilides in forming large sects of Christian Gnostics. One of these was Carpocrates of Alexandria, whose followers differed but little from the Basilidians, except in the greater looseness of their morals, and in their having portraits of Jesus. He was followed by his son Epiphanes, who had studied Platonism in Alexandria, and who was thus enabled to give a more Grecian form to the Gnostic opinions. Then came Isidorus, the son of Basilides, who taught the same heresy before the end of this reign; and in the following reign Valentinus, a native of Pharbæthum, who had studied in Alexandria. This last raised the number of the *æons* to thirty, and after preaching through Upper and Lower Egypt, he carried his Gnostic opinions to Italy, where he threw the Roman church into alarm by the crowd of followers who eagerly embraced this mystical superstition. Apelles also, another Gnostic, when driven away from Italy, studied many years in Alexandria, and returned, says Tertul-

Theodoret. Hæret. i. Epiphanius, Hæres. i.

Tertullian. Hæret. xxx.

lian, no better for living in that city of heretics. Another Christian sect were the Ophitæ, so named from their grafting Christianity on their ancient worship of the serpent, whom they thought Christ, or even above Christ, as being the author of the knowledge of good and evil. Their engraved gems with a serpent, named the Spirit of Death, or an armed man's body with two serpents for his legs, and with the word IAO for Jehovah, and various mystic letters and figures, prove that to them Jehovah was a God of wrath, not of mercy, a God to be feared, not to be loved (see Fig. 89). Beneath both these figures they wrote the charmed word ABRASAX, *hurt me not;* and they studied the same arts of magic as the followers of Basilides.

Epiphanius, Hæres. 37.

Macarii Abraxas.

Fig. 89.

(25) The Gnostics have left one or two treatises on magic, explaining to us the methods which they employed to discover a thief, to obtain good luck, to procure prophetic dreams, to make the gods speak, to manufacture a wishing ring, to foretell death or recovery from sickness, to cause hatred between man and wife, to make friends love, and to make enemies die. For these purposes they very much employed a child as their tool. They sometimes mixed herbs, sometimes used a sculptured stone beetle, sometimes a ring, and sometimes water from a ship that had been wrecked. But they more particularly trusted to forms of words. They addressed the god by a variety of names, Greek, Egyptian, and Hebrew; and we remark that as the Greeks had thought the Egyptian language most fitted for sacred use, so now the Egyptians thought that Hebrew words would be most listened to by the powers of darkness. The

speaker sometimes used poetry; and often long words formed by help of the seven vowels only. He sometimes took upon himself the character of a Hebrew prophet or other superior being, and threatened the god in order to make him answer; and he chose a time when the moon and planets were thought to be favourable to his wishes. Chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, and knowledge of languages were all made use of in this vain but popular science.

(26) We have above seen the form which Christianity at first took among the Egyptians; but, as few writings by these Gnostics have come down to our time, we chiefly know their opinions from the reproaches of their enemies. It was not till the second generation of Gnostic teachers were spreading their poisonous heresies, that the Greek philosophers began to embrace Christianity, or the Christians to study Greek literature; but as soon as that was the case we have an unbroken chain of writings, in which we find Christianity more or less mixed with Alexandrian Platonism. The pure religion of Jesus was at first opposed among the Jews by the vain love of ceremony, and by treating the works of their law as of higher worth than good conduct; and then among the Greeks by a vicious love of sensual pleasures; and now among the Alexandrians and Egyptians it is to be opposed by a cloudy mysticism, which, as we have seen, had already taught them to think that Osiris was at the same time a god and could suffer death, and that when worshipping Ra, Horus, and Osiris, they were only worshipping one god, and that at the day of judgment justice was to be satisfied by an atoning sacrifice. The Christians borrowed at the same time the old customs and the old opinions; it was natural to do so. Of course many of their customs were wholly blameless. Such was the use of the wedding ring. It was a piece of money, and the Egyptian at his marriage placed it on his wife's finger, in token of his trusting her with all his property. The early Christians saw no harm in following this custom, particularly as the ring bore no engraved stone with idolatrous figures on it. And in our own marriage ceremony the man places the same plain ring of gold on his bride's finger when he says, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow."

Clemens Pædag. iii. 2.

(27) The philosopher Justin, after those who had talked with the apostles, is the earliest Christian writer whose works have reached us. He was a Greek, born in Samaria; but he studied many years in Alexandria under philosophers of all opinions. He did not however at once find in the schools the wisdom he was in search for. The Stoic could teach him nothing about God; the Peripatetic wished to be paid for his lessons before he gave them; and the Pythagorean proposed to begin with music and mathematics. Not content with these, Justin turned to the Platonist, whose purer philosophy seemed to add wings to his thoughts, and taught him to mount aloft towards true wisdom. While turning over in his mind what he had thus learned in the several schools, dissatisfied with the philosophers' views of God's government and man's duty, he chanced one day to meet with an old man walking on the sea-shore near Alexandria, to whom he unbosomed his thoughts, and by whom he was converted to Christianity. Platonism was the step to the new religion.

Dialog. cum Tryphone. Apolog. ii.

(28) Justin tells us that there were no people, whether Greeks or barbarians, or even dwellers in tents and waggons, among whom prayers were not offered up to our heavenly father in the name of the crucified Jesus. The Christians met every Sunday for public worship, which began with a reading from the prophets, or from the memoirs of the apostles called the Gospels. This was followed by a sermon, a prayer, the bread and wine, and a second prayer. Justin's quotations prove that he is speaking of our New Testament, which within a hundred years of the crucifixion was read in all the principal cities in which Greek was spoken.

(29) When Justin became a Christian he still wore the dress of a philosopher, and held to many of the opinions which he had gained from other sources; and his writings, like those of all the Christian Fathers of the early Alexandrian school, have many traces of Platonism. His chief work is a Dialogue which he held with a Jew named Trypho. He therein explains his own change of opinion from Platonism to Christianity, and quotes largely from the Old Testament to prove to the Jew that Jesus is the Messiah whom his nation had been looking for. To these arguments Trypho makes suitable answers, and the dialogue ends with

Justin's setting sail for Rome, Trypho thanking him for calling his attention to the prophecies, and wishing him health and a safe voyage, while Justin prays that Trypho may have his mind turned to Christ. At Rome he wrote his apologies for Christianity, addressed to the Romans and to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and there, by his death in the cause of his religion, he gained the name of Justin Martyr. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

(30) The Platonic professorship in Alexandria had usually been held by an Athenian, and for a short time Athenagoras of Athens taught that branch of philosophy in the Museum; but he afterwards embraced the Christian religion, and then taught Christianity openly in Alexandria. He enjoys with Justin the honour of being one of the first men of learning who were converted, and, like Justin, his chief work is an apology for the Christians, addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Athenagoras confines himself in his defence to the resurrection from the dead and the unity of the deity, the points chiefly attacked by the pagans. The philosophers had defended their numerous gods, as being only parts of the deity, and said that they also believed in only one god; but Athenagoras argues that the eternal uncreated God is undivided and without parts; and he says that when the Christians spoke of the Son of God they did not mean either a second God or a part of the Deity, but only God's wisdom and understanding. He beautifully explains the doctrines of the Christians by quoting the commands of the New Testament, that we should love our enemies and pray for those who injure us, and that we should guard even our looks and thoughts, lest they lead us into sin. Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell. Apologia pro Christ.

(31) Hadrian's Egyptian coins are remarkable both for number and variety. In the sixth year of the reign we see a ship with spread sails, most likely in gratitude for the emperor's safe arrival in Egypt. In the eighth year we see the head of the favourite Antinous, who had been placed among the gods of the country. In the eleventh year, when the emperor took up the tribunitial power at Rome for a second period of ten years, we find a series of coins each bearing the name of the *nome* or district in which it was coined. This indeed is the most remarkable Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

year of the most remarkable reign in the whole history of coinage; we have numerous coins for every year of this reign, and, in this year, for nearly every nome in Egypt. Some coins are strongly marked with the favourite opinion

Fig. 90.

of the Gnostics as to the opposition between good and evil (see Fig. 90). On one we have the war between the serpent of good and the serpent of evil, distinguished by their different forms and by the emblems of Isis and Serapis; on

others the heads of Isis and Serapis, the principles of love and fear; while on a third these two are united into a trinity by Horus, who is standing on an eagle instead of having an eagle's head, as of old.

(32) The beginning of the reign of ANTONINUS PIUS (see Fig. 91) was remarkable as being the end of the Sothic period of one thousand four hundred and sixty years; the movable new-year's day of the calendar had come round to the place in the natural year from which it first began to move in the reign of Menophres or Thothmosis III.; it had come round to the day when the Dog-star rose heliacally. If the years had been counted from the beginning of this great year, there could have been no doubt when it came to an end, as from the want of a leap-year the new-year's day must have been always moving one day in four years; but no satisfactory reckoning of the years had been kept, and as the end of the period was only known by observation, there was some little doubt about the exact year. Indeed, among the Greek astronomers Dositheus said the Dog-star rises heliacally twenty-three days after midsummer, Meton twenty-eight days, and Euctemon thirty-one days; they thus left a doubt of thirty-two years as to when the period should end, but the statesmen placed it in the first year of the reign of Antoninus. This end of the Sothic period was called the return of the phœnix, and had been looked forward to by the Egyptians for many years, and is well marked on the coins of this reign. The coins for the first eight years teem with astronomy. There are several with the goddess Isis in a boat, which we know, from the zodiac in the Memnonium at Thebes, was meant for the heliacal rising of the Dog-star. In the second year we have the phœnix less distinctly marked by a palm branch (see Fig. 92). In the second and in the sixth year we find on the coins the remarkable word AION, *the age* or *period*, and an ibis with a glory of rays round its head, meant for the bird phœnix (see Fig. 93). In the seventh

Fig. 91.

Censorinus, De die nat. Theon, ap. Cory. A.D. 138.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

year we see Orpheus playing on his lyre while all the animals of the forest are listening, thus pointing out the return of the golden age. In the eighth year we have the

Fig. 92.

Fig. 93.

head of Serapis surrounded by the seven planets, and the whole within the twelve signs of the zodiac; and on another coin we have the sun and moon within the signs of the zodiac. A series of twelve coins for the same year tells us that the house of the sun, in the language of the astrologers, is in the lion, that of the moon in the crab, the houses of Venus in the scales and the bull, those of Mars in the scorpion and the ram, those of Jupiter in the archer and the fishes, those of Saturn in the sea-goat and aquarius, those of Mercury in the virgin and the twins (see Fig. 94). On the coins of the same year we have the eagle and thunderbolt, the sphinx, the bull Apis, the Nile and crocodile, Isis nursing the child Horus, the hawk-headed Aroëris, and the winged sun. On coins of other years we have a camelopard, Horus sitting on the lotus-flower, and a sacrifice to Isis, which was celebrated on the last day of the year.

(33) The coins also tell us of the bountiful overflow of the Nile, and of the goodness of the harvests that followed; thus, in the ninth, tenth, thirteenth, and seventeenth years, we see the River Nile in the form of an old man leaning on a crocodile, pouring corn and fruit out of a cornucopia, while a child by his side, with the figures 16, tells us that on those years the waters of the Nile rose at Memphis to the wished-for height of sixteen cubits. From these latter coins

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Lucian. Rhetor. Præc.

it would seem that but little change had taken place in the soil of the Delta by the yearly deposit of mud; Herodotus says that sixteen cubits was the wished-for rise of the Nile at Memphis when he was there. And we

Lib. ii. 13.

Fig. 94.

should almost think that the seasons were more favourable to the husbandman during the reign of an Antonine than of a Caligula, did we not set it down to the canals being better cleansed by the care of the prefect, and to the mildness of the government leaving the people at liberty to enjoy the bounties of nature, and at the same time making them more grateful in acknowledging them.

(34) The mystic emblems on the coins are only what we might look for from the spread of the Gnostic opinions, and the eagerness with which the Greeks were copying the superstitions of the Egyptians; and, while astrology was thus countenanced by the state, of course it was not less followed by the people. The poor Jews took to it as a trade. In Alexandria the Jewess, half beggar half fortune-teller, would stop people in the streets and interpret

Juvenal, Sat. vi. 543.

dreams by the help of the Bible, or sit under a sacred tree like a sybil, and promise wealth to those who consulted her, duly proportioned to the size of the coin by which she was paid. We find among the Theban ruins pieces of papyrus with inscriptions, describing the positions of the heavens at particular hours in this reign, for the astrologers therewith to calculate the nativities of the persons then born. On one is a complete horoscope, containing the places of the sun, moon, and every planet, noted down on the zodiac in degrees and minutes of a degree; and with these particulars the mathematician undertook to foretell the marriage, fortune, and death of the person who had been born at the instant when the heavenly bodies were so situated; and, as the horoscope was buried in the tomb with the mummy, we must suppose that it was thought to hold good even in the next world. By the help of this superstitious record we now fix the date of this emperor's reign with mathematical certainty.

Young's Hieroglyphics, pl. 52.

(35) But astrology was not the only end to which mathematics were then turned. Claudius Ptolemy, the astronomer and geographer, was at that time the ornament of the mathematical school of Alexandria. In his writings he treats of the earth as the centre of the heavens, and the sun, moon, and planets as moving in circles and epicycles round it. This had been the opinion of most of the early astronomers; but since this theory of the heavens received the stamp of his authority it is now always called the Ptolemaic system. We should remark, however, that Ptolemy does not speak of the epicycles in which the ancients supposed the planets moved as having any real existence, but only as a theory invented "to save the appearances." He has left many valuable observations on the planets and fixed stars; but has done us a still greater service by collecting together in his great work, his Syntaxis or Almagest, the scattered observations and knowledge of the earlier astronomers. What is now of the greatest value to us is the series of eclipses which had been observed at Babylon and Alexandria for the eight hundred years before his time. By recording these Ptolemy has done more for chronology than any other writer whatever; on these we chiefly rest for the dates of the kings of Babylon, of Persia, of Judæa, and of Egypt. In his work on

geography Ptolemy explains how a globe is to be made, and how a map is to be laid down on a projection nearly the same as that now used. He measures the latitudes by the length of the longest day at each place, and the longitudes by the distance from the meridian of Alexandria; and his geographical description of the countries of the world is more minute and more exact than that of any former writer. His work on Musical Harmony is the best explanation of the opinions of the ancients on that subject. As his life drew to a close, when he was in about his seventy-seventh year, he wished to leave behind him the results of his labours, in some form which was more likely to last than on frail and crumbling papyrus. So, on a column of hard stone, in the city of Canopus, he engraved the Elements of the planets' orbits, the result of more than twenty years' observations. This stone, meant to have been so lasting, has long since been lost, but his Elements of the planets have been saved for us by being copied by some friendly hand on the despised papyrus. Ptolemy observed the altitudes of the heavenly bodies on the meridian by means of a brass circle fixed on a column, with a graduated edge and a plumb line to mark the zenith, and two movable points to guide the sight. In the case of the sun he also used a mural quadrant, noting on the edge the shadow of a point in the centre. This also had a plumb line. The difference of longitude between two bodies he measured by means of a very complicated astrolabe formed of several circles (see Fig. 95). One circle revolved on a fixed diameter, which was the pole of the equator; and it carried with it three other circles, one fixed at right angles to it as an ecliptic, and two which revolved, one within and one without it, on a diameter which was the pole of the ecliptic. By these two the difference of longitude between two bodies was measured upon the graduated ecliptic circle, while one of them had two movable points for the sight, by which at the same time the latitude of one of the observed bodies was measured.

(36) In this reign was made a new survey of all the military roads in the Roman empire, called the Itinerary of Antoninus. It included the great roads of Egypt, which were only six in number. One was from Contra-Pselcis in Nubia along the east bank of the Nile, to Babylon opposite

Memphis, and there turning eastward through Heliopolis and the district of the Jews to Clismon, where Trajan's canal entered the Red Sea. A second, from Memphis to Pelusium, made use of this for about thirty miles, joining it at Babylon, and leaving it at Scenæ Veteranorum. By these two roads a traveller could go from Pelusium to the head of the Red Sea; but there was a shorter road through the desert which joined the first at Serapion, about fifty miles from Clismon, instead of at Scenæ Veteranorum, and which was therefore above a hundred miles shorter. A fourth was along the west bank of the Nile from Hiera Sycaminon in Nubia to Alexandria, leaving the river at Andropolis, about

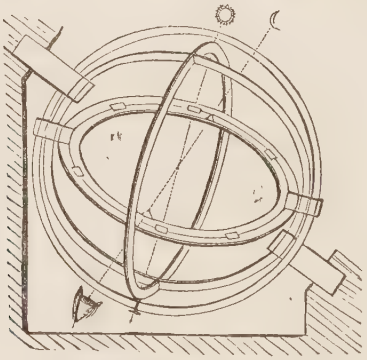


Fig. 95.

sixty miles from the latter city. A fifth was from Palestine to Alexandria, running along the coast of the Mediterranean from Raphia to Pelusium, and thence, leaving the coast to avoid the flat country, which was under water during the inundation, it joined the last at Andropolis. The sixth road was from Coptos on the Nile to Berenice on the Red Sea, between which towns were ten stations, about twenty-five miles apart, where the traveller might rest with his camels each day, after travelling from the former station by night to avoid the heat. These six were probably the only roads under the care of the prefect. Though Syene was the boundary of the province of Egypt, the Roman power was

felt for about one hundred miles into Nubia, and we find the names of the emperors on several temples between Syene and Hiera Sycaminon. At Talmis, where the first cohort of Theban cavalry was usually encamped, we find numerous inscriptions by the soldiers in honour of the god Manduli, the old Mando-Ra, on behalf of themselves and their families, sometimes also on behalf of their horses, and sometimes on behalf of the passer-by who might happen to read them. But beyond Hiera Sycaminon, though we find a few inscriptions left by Roman travellers, the emperors seem never to have aimed at making military roads, or holding any cities against the inroads of the Blemmies and other Arabs.

Wilkinson, Thebes.

Boeckh. Inscript. 5050-4.

(37) To this survey we must add the valuable geographical knowledge given by Arrian in his voyage round the shores of the Red Sea, wherein he mentions the several ports and their distances, with the tribes and cities near the coast. The trade of Egypt to India, Ethiopia, and Arabia was then most valuable, and carried on with great activity; but as the merchandise was in each case carried only for short distances from city to city, the traveller could gain but little knowledge of where it came from, or even sometimes of where it was going. The Egyptians sent coarse linen, glass bottles, brazen vessels, brass for money, and iron for weapons of war and hunting; and they received back ivory, rhinoceros' teeth, Indian steel, Indian ink, silks, slaves, tortoise shell, myrrh, and other scents, with many other eastern articles of high price and little weight. The presents which the merchants made to the petty kings of Arabia were chiefly horses, mules, and gold and silver vases. Beside this, the ports on the Red Sea carried on a brisk trade among themselves in corn, expressed oil, wicker boats, and sugar. Of sugar, or honey from the cane, this is perhaps the earliest mention found in history; but Arrian does not speak of the sugar-cane as then new, nor does he tell us where it was grown. Had sugar been then seen for the first time he would certainly have said so; it must have been an article well known in the Indian trade. While passing through Egypt on his travels, or while living there and holding some post under the prefect, the historian Arrian has left us his name and a few

Arriani Periplus.

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4700.

lines of poetry carved on the foot of the great Sphinx near the pyramids.

(38) At this time also the travellers continued to carve their names and their feelings of wonder on the foot of the musical statue at Thebes and in the deep empty tombs of the Theban kings. These inscriptions are full of curious information. For example, it has been doubted whether the Roman army was provided with medical officers. Their writers have not mentioned them. But part of the Second Legion was at this time stationed at Thebes; and one Asclepiades, while cutting his name in a tomb which once held some old Theban, has cleared up the doubt for us, by saying that he was physician to the Second Legion. Other interesting inscriptions of these reigns, but far less legible, are on broken pieces of pottery, which have been found in the island of Elephantine, and contain the tax-gatherer's receipts for the sums of money paid by the Egyptians of that neighbourhood. These taxes are, the transit duties levied at Syene, those on the farmers for the export of their wheat and beans, those on trades, and a poll-tax. The latter in the reign of Vespasian had been sixteen drachms of silver or about ten shillings a year, but in the following reigns had been more usually seventeen drachms; a large sum, which, however, was probably only levied on the heads of families, and not upon either women, or children, or slaves. The receipts are written in bad Greek, and in a wretched running hand, and sadly disappoint us by the scantiness of their information.

Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4766.

Revue Arch. 1865, and Boeckh. Inscript.

(39) At this time was built a temple dedicated to the god Amun-Kneph, in the Great Oasis, with the usual doorway between two massive square towers. The sculpture represents Antoninus as presenting his offerings to Kneph, Osiris, Isis, and Horus. Antoninus also made a hippodrome, or race-course, for the amusement of the citizens of Alexandria, and built two gates to the city, called the gate of the sun and the gate of the moon, the former fronting the harbour and the latter fronting the Lake Marcotis, and joined by the great street which ran across the whole width of the city. But this reign was not wholly without trouble; there was a

Hoskins's Oasis.

J. Malala. lib. xi. Achilles Tatius, v.

rebellion in which the prefect Dinarchus lost his life, and for which the Alexandrians were severely punished by the emperor.

(40) The coins of MARCUS AURELIUS (see Fig. 96), the successor of Antoninus Pius, have a rich variety of subjects, falling not far short of those of the last reign. On those of the fifth year, the bountiful overflow of the Nile is gratefully acknowledged by the figure of the god holding a cornucopia, and a troop of sixteen children playing round him. It had been not unusual in hieroglyphical writing to express a thought by means of a figure which in the Coptic language had nearly the same sound; and we have seen this copied on the coins in the case of a Greek word, in the bird phœnix being used for the palm-branch phœnix, or the hieroglyphical word *year;* and here we seem to have the same done in the case of a Latin word, as the sixteen children or *cupids* mean sixteen *cubits*, the wished-for height of the Nile's overflow. The statue of the Nile, which had been carried by

Zoega, Num. Ægypt.

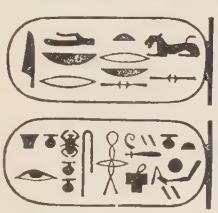


Fig. 96.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 12.

Fig. 97.

Vespasian to Rome and placed in the temple of Peace, was surrounded by the same sixteen children (see Fig. 97). On the coins of his twelfth year the sail held up by the

goddess Isis is blown towards the Pharos lighthouse, as if in that year the emperor had been expected in Alexandria (see Fig. 98).

Fig. 98.

(41) We find no coins in the eleventh or fourteenth years of this reign, which makes it probable that it was in the eleventh year that the rebellion of the native soldiers took place. These were most likely Arabs who had been admitted into the ranks of the legions, but having withdrawn to the desert they now harassed the towns with their marauding inroads, and it was not till after some time that they were wholly put down by Avidius Cassius at the head of the legions. But Cassius himself was unable to resist the temptations which always beset a successful general, and after this victory he allowed himself to be declared emperor by the legions of Egypt; and this seems to have been the cause of no coins being struck in Alexandria in the fourteenth year of the reign. Cassius left his son Mæcianus in Alexandria with the title of Pretorian Prefect, while he himself marched into Syria to secure that province. There the legions followed the example of their brethren in Egypt, and the Syrians were glad to acknowledge a general of the eastern armies as their sovereign. But on Marcus leading an army into Syria he was met with the news that the rebels had repented, and had put Cassius to death, and he then moved his forces towards Egypt; but before his arrival the Egyptian legions had in the same manner put Mæcianus to death, and all had returned to their allegiance.

A.D. 172. J. Capitolinus, in Vitâ Antonini.

A.D. 175.

(42) When Marcus arrived in Alexandria the citizens were agreeably surprised by the mildness of his conduct.

He at once forgave his enemies; and nobody whatever was put to death for having joined in the rebellion. The severest punishment, even to the children of Cassius, was banishment from the province, but without restraint, and with the forfeiture of less than half their patrimony. In Alexandria the emperor laid aside the severity of the soldier, and mingled with the people as a fellow-citizen in the temples and public places; while with the professors in the Museum he was a philosopher, joining them in their studies in the schools. The statue which he set up of himself in the city was not clothed in the rich military dress usually seen upon the emperors' statues, but in the long toga of the old Roman citizen, with folds which the Egyptian and Alexandrian sculptors would have found it difficult to imitate, and which had long since gone out of fashion even in Rome itself. British Museum.

(43) Rome and Athens at this time alike looked upon Alexandria as the centre of the world's learning. The library was then in its greatest glory; the readers were numerous, and Christianity had as yet raised no doubts about the value of its pagan treasures. All the wisdom of Greece, written on rolls of brittle papyrus or tough parchment, was ranged in boxes on its shelves. Of these writings the few that have been saved from the wreck of time are no doubt some of the best, and they are perhaps enough to guide our less simple taste towards the unornamented grace and natural elegance of the Greek model. But we often fancy those treasures most valuable that are beyond our reach, and hence when we run over the names of the authors in this library we think perhaps too much of those which are now missing. The student in the Museum could have read the lyric poems of Alcæus and Stesichorus, which in matter and style were excellent enough to be judged not quite so good as Homer; the tender lamentations of Simonides; the warm breathings of Sappho the tenth muse; the pithy iambics of Archilochus, full of noble flights and brave irregularities; the comedies of Menander, containing every kind of excellence; those of Eupolis and Cratinus, which were equal to Aristophanes; the histories of Theopompus, which in the speeches were as good as Thucydides; the lively agreeable orations of Hyperides, the Quintilian, lib. x. ch. i.

accuser of Demosthenes; with the books of travels and annalists, and countless others of less merit for style and genius, but which, if they had been saved, would not have left Egypt wholly without a history.

(44) The trade of writing and making copies of the old authors employed a great many hands in the neighbourhood of the Museum. Two kinds of handwriting were in use. One was a running hand, with the letters joined together in rather a slovenly manner; and the other a neat regular hand with the letters square and larger, written more slowly but read more easily (see Fig. 99). Those that wrote the first were called *quick-writers*, those that wrote the second were called *book-writers*. If an author was not skilled in the use of the pen, he employed a *quick-*

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. 23.

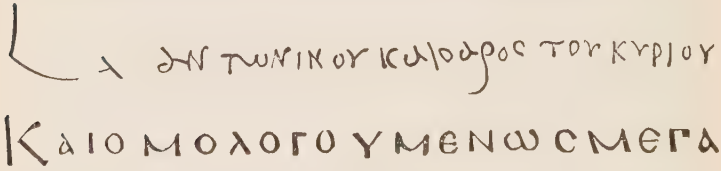


Fig. 99.—Alexandrian Writing.

writer to write down his words as he delivered them. But in order that his work might be published it was handed over to the *book-writers* to be copied out more neatly; and numbers of young women, skilled in penmanship, were employed in the trade of copying books for sale. For this purpose parchment was coming into use, though the old papyrus was still used as less costly, though less lasting.

(45) Athenæus, if we may judge from his writings, was then in the centre of the Alexandrian wits and men of learning. We learn from his own pages that he was born at Naucratis, and was the friend of Pancrates, who lived under Hadrian, and also of Oppian, who died in the reign of Caracalla. His Deipnosophist, or table talk of the Philosophers, is a large work full of pleasing anecdotes and curious information, gathered from comic writers and authors

without number that have long since been lost. But it is put together with very little skill. His industry and memory are more remarkable than his judgment or good taste; and we are sorry to find that the table talk is too often turned towards eating and drinking. His amusing work is a picture of society in Alexandria, where everything frivolous was treated as grave, and everything serious was laughed at. The wit sinks into scandal, the humour is at the cost of morality, and the numerous quotations are chosen for their point, not for any lofty thoughts or noble feeling. Alexandria was then as much the seat of literary wit as it was of dry criticism; and Martial, the lively author of the Epigrams, had fifty years before remarked, that there were few places in the world where he would more wish his verses to be repeated than on the banks of the Nile. Lib. ii. 5.

(46) Nothing could be lower than the poetic taste in Alexandria at this time. The Museum was giving birth to a race of poets who, instead of bringing forth thoughts out of their own minds, found them only in the storehouse of the memory. They wrote their patchwork poems by the help of Homer's lines, which they picked from all parts of the Iliad and Odyssey, and so put together as to make them tell a new tale. They called themselves Homeric Poets. One of these ingenious writers, named Arius, who had a salary from the Museum as a reward for his industry, visited Upper Egypt, and has left us carved upon the foot of the musical statue of Amunothph his admiration of what he heard, by bringing together four of Homer's lines. Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4748.

(47) Valerius Harpocration of Alexandria may have lived about the same time as Athenæus; but at any rate not earlier, since he had read the Deipnosophist. Suidas. He was the author of a lexicon in explanation of the writings of the ten Grecian orators. This is one of many useful works of learning and industry without genius for which the world is indebted to the grammarians of Alexandria. It explains the customs of the judges and lawyers at Athens, and the lives of the persons mentioned by the orators.

(48) Ælius Harpocration was another grammarian of Alexandria, who lived about the same time, unless Suidas has

made two persons out of one. He was the author of several works not now extant, and was called to Rome to give lessons in Greek to the young Ælius Verus, the adopted son of Hadrian and Marcus; and from the youthful patron the learned grammarian, like any other slave, received the name of Ælius.

J. Capitolinus, in Vitâ Veri.

(49) Hephæstion of Alexandria was another grammarian who assisted in the education of Verus. He was the author of the Encheiridion, a valuable work on the metres, lines, and feet of Greek poetry. The Encheiridion is quoted by Longinus, and is still the chief authority on the subject. When the age of poetry was past, the grammarians explained the rules by which verses had been formed; had there been any chance of a new poet arising, they would not have wasted their labour in laying down the laws of versification, which might have been immediately contradicted.

(50) To these grammarians we must add Julius Pollux of Naucratis, who afterwards removed to Athens, where he taught rhetoric. He was the author of the Onomasticon, a work on the words and names used in science, one of the countless volumes of the Alexandrian school of verbal criticism, of which those that have come down to us teach us how little we have to regret in the loss of the rest. He dedicated it to the Emperor Commodus.

Suidas.

Probably about this time also the historian Cheiron of Naucratis lived. He wrote a work like that of Manetho, on the Alexandrian and Egyptian priests, their deeds, and their order of succession, and on the kings that had reigned of old over each of the Egyptian tribes. How many doubts about the early part of Egyptian history would this lost work of Cheiron have cleared up!

Eudosia, ap. Villoison, vol. i. p. 436.

(51) Lucian, the author of the Dialogues, was at that time secretary to the prefect of Egypt, and he boasts that he had a large share in writing the laws and ordering the justice of the province. Here this laughing philosopher found a broad mark for his humour in the religion of the Egyptians, their worshipping animals and water-jars (see Fig. 103), their love of magic, the general mourning through the land on the death of the bull Apis, their funeral ceremonies, their placing their mummies round the dinner-table as so many

Apolog. pro merc. cond.

Lucianus, De luctu.

guests, and pawning a father or a brother when in want of money. So little had the customs changed, that the young Egyptians of high birth still wore their long hair tied in one lock, and hanging over the right ear, as we see on the Theban sculptures fifteen centuries earlier. It was then a mark of royalty, but had since been adopted by many families of high rank (see Fig. 100). But the freedom which Lucian used in making game of the old habits would seem to prove that they were already weakened, and ready to fall before the new religion from Galilee. Navigium.

Fig. 100.

(52) Before the end of this reign we meet with a strong proof of the spread of Christianity in Egypt. The number of believers made it necessary for the bishop of Alexandria to appoint three bishops under him, to look after the churches in three other cities; and accordingly Demetrius, who then held that office, took upon himself the rank, if not the name, of Patriarch of Alexandria. A second proof of the spread of Christianity is the pagan philosophers thinking it necessary to write against it. Celsus, an Epicurean of Alexandria, was one of the first to attack it; but his works are only known to us in Origen's Answer. The arguments which he brought forward are not altogether the same as those by which Christianity has been assailed in more modern days Celsus scarcely called in question the truth of the gospels as a history; he might perhaps himself, as a child, have seen men who had seen the apostles. He did not doubt the miracles, but argued that they proved nothing, as they might have been worked by magic or by Egyptian arts. But he refused to acknowledge the antiquity of the Hebrew Scriptures, and said that they were borrowed from the Egyptians; he also brought forward the opinion of the Jews, that their prophecies respecting the Messiah did not point to Jesus; and he blamed the philosophy of the New Testament as being unfavourable to learning, and its morality as too forgiving toward sinners. His chief attempt was to throw ridicule on the narrative in the gospels, and while so doing he proves Eutychii Annales. Origen. contra Celsum.

the esteem in which they were held; and at the same time his numerous references to every part of the New Testament prove that it was in most respects the same book that we now read for the truths of our religion.

(53) Origen, whom we shall hereafter have to speak of, answered the several arguments of Celsus with skill and candour. He challenges his readers to a comparison between the Christians and pagans in point of morals, in Alexandria or in any other city. He argues in the most forcible way that Christianity had overcome all difficulties, and had spread itself far and wide against the power of kings and emperors, which it could not have done without the help of God; and he says that nobody but a Christian ever died a martyr to the truth of his religion. He makes good use of the Jewish prophecies; but, unlike modern writers on the truth of Christianity, he brings forward no proofs in support of the truth of the gospel history; they were not wanted, as Celsus and the pagans had not called it in question.

(54) Celsus was a believer in one God, and thought it unimportant under what name he was spoken of, whether as Ammon, Jupiter, or Adonai. He defended the pagans, as only believing that their numerous gods were so many angels or servants of the Almighty. He blamed the Hebrew writers for saying that God created man in his own image; because God is without form. But though a pagan, Celsus had a great respect for the Hebrew Scriptures; in quoting the Dialogue, which we have now unfortunately lost, between Jason and Papiscus, the one a Christian and the other a Jew of Alexandria, though he argued that the Christian's arguments were weak, it is clear that he in some part admitted the weight of an appeal to prophecy, in proof of Jesus being a divine teacher. Jews and Christians were not then separated by the wide gulf that was set between them by the council of Nicæa. They were fellow-sufferers under pagan persecution and contempt, and they made common cause against atheism on the one side and idolatry on the other. The real strength of Christianity lay then as now in its consoling view of God's mercy, in the purity of its morality, and in our feeling it to be true by the measure which the Creator has planted in our own breasts; but the logical arguments by which it was supported during the first two

centuries were drawn more from the Hebrew prophecies, and less from the miracles, than they have ever been since.

(55) Another and a painful proof of the number of Egyptian Christians is seen in the literary frauds of which their writers were guilty, most likely to satisfy the minds of those pagan converts that they had already made, rather than from a wish to make new believers. About this time was written by an unknown Christian author a poem in eight books, named the Sibylline Verses, which must not be mistaken for the pagan fragments of the same name. It is written in the form of a prophecy, in the style used by the Gnostics, and is full of dark sentences and half-expressed hints. It describes the Roman emperors by the numbers, or *first letters* of their names, and thus teaches us what is meant by the number of the Beast in the Book of Revelation. It begins with a slight glance at the history of the Jews, it grieves in a melancholy tone over the several nations of the earth, and foretells Christ's coming about the time that Egypt should be conquered by the Romans. It then enumerates the emperors who are to reign over Rome down to the three successors of him who is to be named after the Adriatic Sea, in whose family the sceptre is to remain for ever. This fixes the time of the author to the reign of Aurelius and Verus, or at latest to that of Commodus; while the whole train of thought points to Alexandria as the place where it was written. These verses profess to be the work of an inspired sibyl of the time of Noah, and they were received by many of the Egyptian Christians as a proof of the divine mission of Jesus. They are undoubtedly a pious fraud, and as such they deceived many. Celsus charges the Christians with being sibyllists; but, notwithstanding this sneer, these verses are quoted as authority by many Christian writers, and even by the Romish Church to the present day.

Ap. Origen. Hymn. *Dies Iræ.*

(56) Another spurious Christian work of about the same time is the Clementina, or the Recognitions of Clemens, Bishop of Rome. It is an account of the travels of the Apostle Peter, and his conversation with Simon Magus; but the author's knowledge of the Egyptian mythology, of the opinions of the Greek philosophers, and of the astrological rules by which fortunes are foretold from the planets' places, amply

prove that he was an Egyptian or an Alexandrian. He was most likely a Jewish convert, as he does not believe the divinity of Jesus, and he puts into the mouth of Simon Magus, as an heretical opinion, the Platonic doctrine of two inferior gods proceeding from the Creator of all things. No name ranked higher among the Christians than that of Clemens Romanus; and this is only one out of several cases of Christian authors who wished to give weight to their own opinions by passing them upon the world as his writings.

(57) In studying the history of literature, as we note the several times in which poetry, criticism, and science flourished, so it is equally curious to mark the ages which have given birth to literary forgeries. These are likely to have been written at a time when poetic genius was wanting; when men had seen and valued literary excellence, but could no longer produce it. In Alexandria it was when Theocritus, Callimachus, and Apollonius were no more. It was at a time when the art of criticism had decayed; when the followers of Aristophanes and Aristarchus had lost the power of making pretenders tremble under their lash; and when the professors in the Museum were unable to detect the falsehood of what the dealers in manuscripts offered for sale as an original author. It is not always easy to learn when and where works put forth under a false name were really written; but we have already mentioned several which were written in Alexandria since the time of Euergetes II., and it is probable that many others were about this time forged by the dishonest cleverness of the Alexandrians.

A god formed of Horus, Knef, and the Pigmy Pthah.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REIGNS OF COMMODUS, PERTINAX, NIGER, SEVERUS, CARACALLA, MACRINUS, ELAGABALUS, ALEXANDER, MAXIMINUS, BALBINUS, THE GORDIANS, AND PHILIP. A.D. 181—249.

(1) THE late emperor had pardoned the children of the rebel general Avidius Cassius, but COMMODUS (see Fig. 101) began his reign by putting them to death; and while thus disregarding the example and advice of his father, he paid his memory the idle compliment of continuing his series of dates on his own coins. But the Egyptian coinage of Commodus clearly betrays the sad change that was gradually taking place in the arts of the country; we no longer see the former beauty and variety of subjects; and the silver, which had before been very much mixed with copper, was under Commodus hardly to be known from brass. On a coin of the tenth year we see the lighthouse of the island of Pharos with a ship sailing away from it. This may have been in token of the Egyptian fleet which Commodus established to fetch with the necessary regularity the yearly supply of corn from Alexandria. Or it may mean that in that year Egypt had been honoured with a visit from the emperor. This is not improbable, as in Rome he was very partial to the Egyptian superstitions, and he had adopted the tonsure, and had his head shaven like a priest of Isis, that he might more properly carry an Anubis staff in the sacred processions (see Fig. 102).

Vulcatius, Vit. Cassii.

A.D. 181.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Fig. 101.

Lampridius, Vit. Commodi.

Fig. 102.

(2) Upper Egypt had latterly been falling off fast in population. It had been drained of all its hoarded wealth. Its carrying trade through Coptos to the Red Sea was much lessened. Any tribute that its temples received from the piety of the neighbourhood was small. Nubia was a desert; and a few soldiers at Syene were enough to guard the poverty of the Thebaid from the inroads of the Blemmyes. It was no longer necessary to send criminals to the Oasis; it was enough to banish them to the neighbourhood of Thebes. Hence we learn but little of the state of the country. Now and then a traveller, after measuring the pyramids of Memphis and the underground tombs of Thebes, might venture as far as the cataracts, and watch the sun at noon on the longest day, shining to the bottom of the sacred well at Syene, like the orator Aristides and his friend Dion in this reign; but even such travellers were few. Aristides indeed lost the notes which he made upon his journey; and from him we learn little beyond the measure of the Nile's rise, which was twenty-eight cubits at Elephantine, twenty-one at Coptos, and fourteen at Memphis.

Aristid. Oratio Ægypt.

(3) The celebrated Museum, which had held the vast library of the Ptolemies, had been burnt by the soldiers of Julius Cæsar in one of their battles with the Egyptian army in the streets of Alexandria; but the loss had been in part repaired by Mark Antony's gift of the library from Pergamus to the temple of Serapis. The new library, however, would seem to have been placed in a building somewhat separated from the temple, as when the temple of Serapis was burnt in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and again when it was in part destroyed by fire in the second year of this reign, we hear of no loss of books; and two hundred years later the library of the Serapium had risen to the number of seven hundred thousand volumes. The temple-keeper to the great god Serapis, or one of the temple-keepers, at this time was Asclepiades, a noted boxer and wrestler, who had been made chief of the wrestling-ground, and had received the high rank of the emperor's freedman. He set up a statue to his father Demetrius, an equally noted boxer and wrestler, who had been chief priest of the wrestling-ground and of the emperor's baths in the last reign. Such was the strange union of

Eusebii Chronicon.

Inscript. Gruter, ccexiii.

offices and honours among the priests of Alexandria. Another favourite in the theatre was Apolaustus of Memphis, who removed to Rome, where he was crowned as conqueror in the games, and as a reward made priest to Apollo and emperor's freedman. Inscript. Gruter, cccxiii. 8.

(4) The city of Canopus was still a large mart for merchandise, as the shallow but safe entrance to its harbour made it a favourite with pilots of the small trading vessels, who rather dreaded the rocks at the mouth of the harbour of Alexandria. A temple of Serapis which had lately been built at Canopus was dedicated to the god in the name of the Emperor Commodus; and there some of the grosser superstitions of the polytheists fled before the spread of Christianity and Platonism in Alexandria. The Canobic jars, which held those parts of Strabo, lib. xvii. 1. Inscript. ap. Letronne.

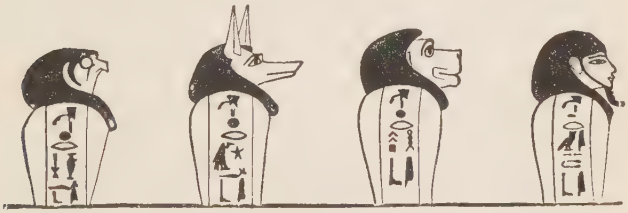


Fig. 103.

the body that could not be made solid in the mummy, and which had the heads of the four lesser gods of the dead on their lids, received their name from this city (see Fig. 103). The sculptures on the beautiful temples of Contra-Latopolis were also finished in this reign, and the emperor's names and titles were carved on the walls in hieroglyphics, with those of the Ptolemies, under whom the temple itself had been built. Commodus may perhaps not have been the last emperor whose name and praises were carved in hieroglyphics; but all the great buildings in the Thebaid, which add such value to the early history of Egypt, had ceased before his reign. Other buildings of a less lasting form were no doubt being built, such as the Greek temples at Antinoopolis and Ptolemais, which have long since been swept away; but the Egyptian priests, Wilkinson, Thebes. Denon pl. 53.

with their gigantic undertakings, their noble plan of working for after ages rather than for themselves, were nearly ruined, and we find few ancient buildings now standing in Egypt that were raised after the time of the Antonines.

(5) But the poverty of the Egyptians was not the only cause why they built no more temples. Though the colossal statue of Amunothph uttered its musical notes every morning at sunrise, still tuneful amid the desolation with which it was surrounded, and the Nile was still worshipped at midsummer by the husbandman to secure its fertilising overflow; nevertheless the religion itself for which the temples had been built was fast giving way before the silent spread of Christianity. The religion of the Egyptians, unlike that of the Greeks, was no longer upheld by the magistrate; it rested solely on the belief of its followers, and it may have sunk into Christianity the faster for the greater number of truths which were contained in it than in the paganism of other nations. The scanty hieroglyphical records tell us little of thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Indeed that cumbersome mode of writing, which alone was used in religious matters, was little fitted for anything beyond the most material parts of their mythology. Hence we must not believe that the Egyptian polytheism was quite so gross as would appear from the sculptures; and indeed we there learn that they believed, even at the earliest times, in a resurrection from the tomb, a day of judgment, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

Inscript. R. Soc. Lit. vol. ii. 2.

(6) The priests made a great boast of their learning and philosophy, and could each repeat by heart those books of Thoth which belonged to his own order. The singer, who walked first in the sacred processions bearing the symbols of music, could repeat the books of hymns and the rules for the king's life (see Fig 104 *a*). The soothsayer, who followed, carrying an hour-glass, and a palm-branch, the emblem of the year (see Fig. 105, page 200), could repeat the four astrological books; one on the moon's phases, one on the fixed stars, and two on their heliacal risings. The scribe, who walked next (see Fig. 104 *c*), carrying a book and the flat rule which held the ink and pen, was acquainted with the geography of the world and of the Nile, and with those books which describe the motions of the sun, moon, and

Clemens Alex. Strom. vi.

planets, and the furniture of the temple and consecrated places. The master of the robes carried the rod of justice and the sacrificial vase. He understood the ten books relating to education, to the marks on the sacred heifers, and to the worship of the gods, embracing the sacrifices, the

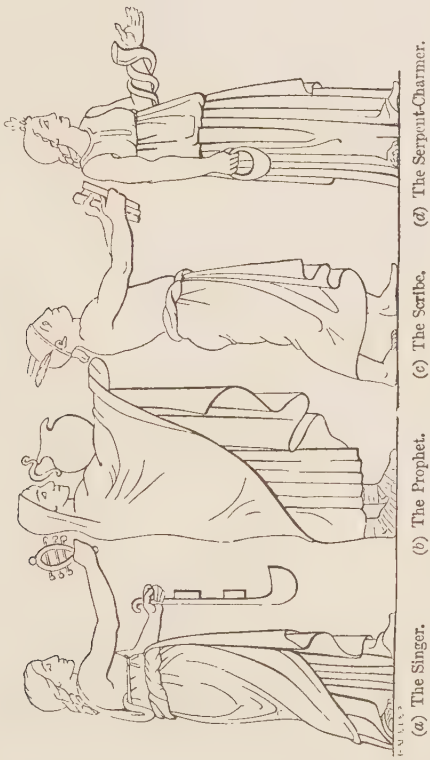


Fig. 104.

firstfruits, the hymns, the prayers, the processions, and festivals. The prophet, or ventriloquist, who walked last, carrying in his arms the great water-pot, or speaking-bottle (see Fig. 104 *b*), was the president of the temple, and learned

in the ten books, called hieratic, relating to the laws, the gods, the management of the temples, and the revenue. Thus, of the forty-two chief books of Thoth, thirty-six were learned by these priests, while the remaining six on the body, its diseases, and medicines, were learned by the Pastophori, priests who carried the image of the god in a small shrine (see Fig. 106). These books had been written at various times; some may have been very old, but some were undoubtedly new; they together formed the Egyptian bible. Apollonius, or Apollonides Horapis, an Egyptian priest, had lately published a work on these matters in his own language, named Shomenuthi, *the book of the gods*. None of the sacred books seem to have been historical.

Theophilus Antioch. lib. ii. iii.

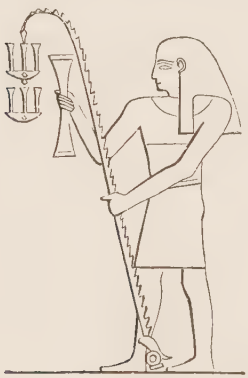


Fig. 105.

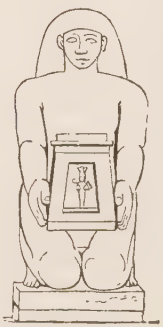


Fig. 106.

(7) But the priests were no longer the earnest sincere teachers as of old; they had invented a system of secondary meanings, by which they explained away the coarse religion of their statues and sacred animals. Like many other nations, they had two religions, one for the many and one for the few; one, material and visible, for the crowds in the outer courtyards, in which the hero was made a god, and every attribute of deity was made a person; and another, spiritual and intellectual, for the learned in the schools and sacred colleges. Even if we were not told we could have no doubt but the

main point of secret knowledge among the learned was a disbelief in those very doctrines which they were teaching to the vulgar, and which they now explained among themselves by saying that they had a second meaning. This was perhaps part of the great secret of the goddess Isis, the secret of Abydos, the betrayer of which was more guilty than he who should try to stop the *baris* or sacred barge in the procession on the Nile. We learn from Celsus, that even those who believed in the gods of the vulgar looked upon them only as so many inferior agents of the one God. And we are told more expressly in the religious treatise of Hermes Trismegistus, which was written about this reign, that the Egyptians now taught that first of truths, that beside the Creator and his created works there was no third being; that all that was visible to eyesight was created; and that the one God, the creator and father of all, was an all-powerful, good, invisible being. How far the Egyptian priests taught this in their schools as early as the great Jewish law-giver taught it openly to his whole nation, we have now no means of knowing; but the writings of Plato, who studied at Heliopolis, will be acknowledged as evidence that it was there taught before the Greeks had a notion of it. The worship of gods, before whose statues the nation had bowed with unchanging devotion for at least two thousand years, was now drawing to a close. Hitherto the priests had been able to resist all new opinions. The name of Amun-Ra had at one time been cut out from the Theban monuments to make way for a god from Lower Egypt; but it had been cut in again when the storm passed by. The Jewish monotheism had left the crowd of gods unlessened. The Persian efforts had overthrown statues and broken open temples, but had not been able to introduce their worship of the sun. The Greek conquerors had yielded to the Egyptian mind without a struggle; and Alexander had humbly begged at the door of the temple to be acknowledged as a son of Amun. But in the fulness of time these opinions, which seemed as firmly based as the monuments which represented them, sunk before a religion which set up no new statues, and could command no force to break open temples.

Jamblichus, De myster. sec. vi. 5, 7.

Celsus, ap. Origen.

Lib. xvii.

(8) The Egyptian priests, who had been proud of the

superiority of their own doctrines over the paganism of their neighbours, felt for the overthrow of their national religion. "Our land," says the author of Hermes Trismegistus, "is the temple of the world; but, as wise men should foresee all things, you should know that a time is coming when it will seem that the Egyptians have by an unfailing piety served God in vain, and their holy religion will become void; for the divinity will return from earth to heaven, Egypt will be forsaken, and the land which was the seat of the divinity will be void of religion. For when strangers shall possess this kingdom religion will be neglected, and laws be made against piety and divine worship, with punishment on those who favour it. Then this holy seat will be full of idolatry, idols' temples, and dead men's tombs. O Egypt, Egypt! there will remain only a feigned show of thy religion, not believed by posterity; and nought but the letters which stand engraven on thy pillars will declare thy pious deeds; and in thee will dwell the Scythians, the Indians, or some other barbarous nation. The divinity will fly to heaven, and Egypt will be forsaken by God and man. I call upon thee, most holy river, I foretell unto thee what will come to pass. Thy waters and holy streams will be filled with blood, and will overflow thy banks, so that the dead will be more numerous than the living; and he that remains alive will be known to be an Egyptian only by his language, while in his deeds he will seem a barbarian." But nothing that has once had being ever wholly dies; and many a faint trace of the Egyptian mind may yet be found mingled with our modern opinions, growing fainter each century as it spreads over a wider surface, but never to be quite lost.

(9) The Eleusinian mysteries, within the temple of Ceres and Proserpine, in the south-east quarter of Alexandria, which had been brought into the city in the reign of Philadelphus, had now lost their sacredness and very much their secrecy. The priestesses had for four centuries walked in procession through the streets carrying a sacred basket; and latterly it had become known that this basket held a live serpent, supposed to be the author of sin and death (see Fig. 107). Within the temple the hierophant wore the dress and mask of Kneph, the crier the mask of Thoth, the priest at the altar the emblem of the

Eusebius, Præp. Evang. lib. iii. 12.

moon, while another with the dress of Ra carried a torch. The celebration of these mysteries, whatever they were, was said by the Christians to be now used as a screen for vice and immorality, and probably with much truth. With the decay of the old religion there was too clearly to be seen an accompanying breaking up of society. Men are not held together by self-interest only; civil and moral laws are not obeyed from the mere dictates of prudence; and hence lawgivers have usually stamped their codes with a divine sanction. Religion is the great bond by which men have at all times been held in social union; the introduction of a new religion and the fall of the old is a revolution as violent as a military conquest, and it may be centuries before the new framework is strong enough to act as a bond to society.

Fig. 107.

(10) The spread of Christianity among the Egyptians was such that their teachers found it necessary to supply them with a life of Jesus, written in their own language, that they might the more readily explain to them his claim to be obeyed, and the nature of his commands. The Gospel according to the Egyptians, for such was the name this work bore, has long since been lost, and was little quoted by the Alexandrians. It was most likely a translation from one of the four gospels, though it had some different readings suited to its own church, and contained some praise of celibacy not found in the New Testament; but it was not valued by the Greeks, and was lost on the spread of the Coptic translation of the whole New Testament.

Clemens Alexandr Strom. iii.

(11) The grave serious Christians of Upper Egypt were very unlike the lively Alexandrians. But though the difference arose from peculiarities of national character, it was only spoken of as a difference of opinion. The Egyptians formed an ascetic sect in the church, who were called heretics by the Alexandrians, and named Docetæ, because they taught that the Saviour was a god, and did not really suffer on the cross, but was crucified only *in appearance*. They of necessity used the Gospel according to the Egyptians, which is quoted by Cassianus, one of their

writers; many of them renounced marriage with the other pleasures and duties of social life, and placed their chief virtue in painful self-denial; and out of them sprang that remarkable class of hermits, monks, and fathers of the desert who in a few centuries covered Europe with monasteries. To act the Egyptian was proverbial with the Greeks for being sly and for being gloomy

Etymologicon Magnum.

(12) It is remarkable that the translation of a gospel into Coptic introduced a Greek alphabet into the Coptic language. Though for all religious purposes the scribes continued to use the ancient hieroglyphics, in which we trace the first steps by which pictures are made to represent words and syllables rather than letters, yet for the common purposes of writing they had long since made use of the *enchorial* or common hand, in which the earlier system of writing is improved by the characters representing only letters, though sadly too numerous for each to have a fixed and well-known force. But, as the hieroglyphics were also always used for carved writing on all subjects, and the common hand only used on papyrus with a reed pen, the latter became wholly an indistinct running hand; it lost that beauty and regularity which the hieroglyphics, like the Greek and Roman characters, kept by being carved on stone, and hence, it would seem, arose the want of a new alphabet for the New Testament. This was made by merely adding to the Greek alphabet six new letters borrowed from the hieroglyphics (see Fig. 108) for those sounds which the Greeks did not use; and the writing was then written from left to right like an European language. By this Coptic alphabet the Greeks repaid an old debt to the Egyptians. Egypt had before taught Greece and the rest of its neighbours the first rudiments of the art of writing; and now Greece gave back to Egypt the last improvement in that art in the form of an alphabet of thirty well-shaped letters. The cumbersome and inexact hieroglyphics were left in the

Fig. 108.—Six Coptic Letters, with their Hieroglyphic Originals.

service of Isis, Serapis, and the bull Apis; while the new and better alphabet, removing the readers' thoughts from the old superstitions, were found to be a valuable help to the spread of the new religion.

(13) It was only on the ancient hieroglyphics thus falling into disuse that the Greeks of Alexandria, almost for the

Fig. 109.—Hieroglyphics.

Fig. 110.—Hieratic Writing.

Fig. 111.—Enchorial Writing.

Fig. 112.

first time, had the curiosity to study the principles on which they were written. Clemens Alexandrinus, who thought no branch of knowledge unworthy of his attention, gives a slight account of them, nearly agreeing with the results of our modern discoveries. He mentions the three kinds of writing; first, the *hieroglyphic* (see Fig. 109); Strom. v.

secondly, the *hieratic* (see Fig. 110), which is nearly the same, but written with a pen, and less ornamental than the carved figures; and thirdly, the *epistolographic*, or common alphabetic writing, now usually called the enchorial (see Fig. 111). He then divides the hieroglyphic into the alphabetic and the symbolic; and lastly, he divides the symbolic characters into the imitative, the figurative, and those formed like riddles. As instances of these last we may quote, for the first, the three zigzag lines, which by simple imitation mean "Water;" for the second, the oval, which means "a Name," because kings' names were written within ovals; and for the third, a cup with three anvils, which mean "Lord of Battles," because "Cup" and "Lord" have nearly the same sound NEB, and "Anvils" and "Battles" have nearly the same sound, MESHE (see Fig. 112).

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist.

(14) In this reign Pantænus of Athens, a Stoic philosopher, held the first place among the Christians of Alexandria. He is celebrated for uniting the study of heathen learning with a religious zeal which led him to preach Christianity in India, or rather Abyssinia. He introduced a taste for philosophy among the Christians; and, though Athenagoras rather deserves that honour, he was called the founder of the catechetical school, which gave birth to the series of learned Christian writers that flourished in Alexandria for the next century. To have been a learned man and a Christian, and to have encouraged learning among the catechists in his schools, may seem deserving of no great praise. Was the religion of Jesus to spread ignorance and darkness over the world? But we must remember that a new religion cannot be introduced without some danger that learning and science may get forbidden, together with the ancient superstitions which had been taught in the same schools; we shall hereafter see that in the quarrels between pagans and Christians, and again between the several sects of Christians, learning was often reproached with being unfavourable to true religion; and then it will be granted that it was no small merit to have founded a school in which learning and Christianity went hand in hand for nearly two centuries. Pantænus has left no writings of his own, and is best known through his pupil or fellow-student Clemens. He is said to have brought with him to Alexandria, from the

Jewish Christians that he met with on his travels, a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel in the original Hebrew, a work now unfortunately lost, which if we possessed it would settle for us the disputed point, whether or no it contained all that now bears that apostle's name in the Greek translation. Hieronymus, Catal. Scriptor.

(15) The learned, industrious, and pious Clemens, who, to distinguish him from Clemens of Rome, is usually called Clemens Alexandrinus, succeeded Pantænus in the catechetical school, and was at the same time a voluminous writer. He was in his philosophy a Platonist, though sometimes called of the Eclectic school. He has left an Address to the Gentiles, a treatise on Christian behaviour called Pedagogus, and eight books of Stromata, or *collections*, which he wrote to describe the perfect Christian or Gnostic, to furnish the believer with a model for his imitation, and to save him from being led astray by the sects of Gnostics "falsely so called." By his advice, and by the imitation of Christ, the Christian is to step forward from faith, through love, to knowledge; from being a slave, he is to become a faithful servant and then a son; he is to become at last a god walking in the flesh. In these writings Clemens pleads the cause of learning, both as a Christian and a scholar, saying that all science is sent from heaven as the true foundation of religion; and he does not scruple to quote Plato for philosophical arguments, while quoting the New Testament for its religious truths. He points out to us the passage in Plato, which we could never otherwise have found, in which that philosopher was said to have taught the doctrine of the trinity. "When Plato says, All things are around the King of all, and all things are because of him, and he is the cause of all that is good; and the things which are second are around the second; and the things which are third are around the third; I cannot but understand that the holy trinity was meant; that the third was the Holy Spirit, and the second the Son, through whom all things were made according to the will of the Father." Strom. v. (Epist. ad Dionys. ii.)

(16) But Clemens was not wholly free from the mysticism which was the chief mark of the Gnostic sect. He thought much of the sacred power of numbers. Abraham Strom. vi.

had three hundred and eighteen servants when he rescued Lot, which when written in Greek numerals thus, ιΤΗ, formed the sacred sign for the name of Jesus. Ten was a perfect number, and is that of the commandments given to Moses. Seven was a glorious number, and there are seven Pleiades, seven planets, seven days in the week; and the two fishes and five barley loaves, with which the multitude were miraculously fed, together make the number of years of plenty in Egypt under Joseph. Clemens also quotes several lines in praise of the seventh day, which he says were from Homer, Hesiod, and Callimachus; but here there is reason to believe that he was deceived by the pious fraud of Aristobulus, or some other zealous Jew, as no such lines are now to be found in the pagan poets. His judgment was not equal to his learning and piety; and in his writings many an addition is made to the simple religion which Jesus taught and practised.

(17) During the reign of PERTINAX, which lasted only three months, we find no traces of his power in Egypt, except the money which the Alexandrians coined in his name. It seems to have been the duty of the prefect of the mint, as soon as he heard of an emperor's death, to lose no time in issuing coins in the name of his successor. It was one of the means to proclaim and secure the allegiance of the province for the new emperor.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. A.D. 194.

(18) During the reign of Commodus, Pescennius Niger had been at the head of the legion that was employed in Upper Egypt in stopping the inroads of their troublesome neighbours, who already sometimes bore the name of Saracens. He was a hardy soldier, and strict in his discipline, while he shared the labours of the field and of the camp with the men under him. He would not allow them the use of wine; and once, when the troops that guarded the frontier at Syene sent to ask for it, he bluntly answered, "You have got the Nile to drink, and cannot possibly want more." Once, when a cohort had been routed by the Saracens, the men complained that they could not fight without wine; but he would not relax in his discipline; "Those who have just now beaten you,"

Spartianus, Vit. Pescennii. A.D. 194.

said Niger, "drink nothing but water." He gained the love and thanks of the people of Upper Egypt by thus bridling the lawlessness of the troops; and they gave him his statue cut in black basalt, in allusion to his name Niger. This statue was placed in his Roman villa.

(19) But on the death of Pertinax, when Septimius Severus declared himself emperor in Pannonia, NIGER, who was then in the province of Syria, did the same. Egypt and the Egyptian legions readily and heartily joined his party which made it unnecessary for him to stay in that part of the empire; so he marched upon Greece, Thrace, and Macedonia. But there, after a few months, he was met by the army of his rival, who also sent a second army into Egypt; and he was defeated and slain at Cyzicus in Mysia, after having been acknowledged as emperor in Egypt and Syria for perhaps a year and a few months. We find no Alexandrian coins of Niger, although we cannot allow a shorter space of time to his reign than one whole year, together with a few months of the preceding and following years. Within that time Severus had to march upon Rome against his first rival Julian, to punish the prætorian guards, and then to conquer Niger. Spartianus, Vit. Severi.

(20) After the death of his rival, when SEVERUS was the undisputed master of the empire, and was no longer wanted in the other provinces, he found leisure to visit Egypt; and, like other active-minded travellers, he examined the pyramids of Memphis and the temples at Thebes, and laughed at the worship of Serapis and the Egyptian animals. His visit to Alexandria was marked by many new laws. Now that the Greeks of that city, crushed beneath two centuries of foreign rule, had lost any remains of courage or of pride that could make them feared by their Roman master, he relaxed part of the strict policy of Augustus. He gave them a senate and a municipal form of government, a privilege that had hitherto been refused in distrust to that great city, though freely granted in other provinces where rebellion was less dreaded. He also ornamented the city with a temple to Rhea, and with a public bath, which was named after himself the Bath of Severus. A.D. 196. J. Malala.

(21) The quick succession of three usurping emperors

within three years of the murder of Commodus had left many cities marked with the guilt of rebellion, and some eager to rush into it. Proclus, the Sophist, who had a profitable school of rhetoric at Naucratis, his native city, found the place then too much unsettled by the political changes for his school to thrive there; so he put his large property, of money, furniture, slaves, books, papyrus, and other merchandise, on board a ship, and removed to Athens, where a number of pupils flocked around him as before, each paying one hundred drachmæ, or about four pounds sterling, for as many lectures as he chose to attend. The city of Naucratis, which had given birth to Athenæus and Julius Pollux, henceforth ceased to be a seat of learning.

Philostratus, in vit. Sophist.

(22) Severus made a law, says the pagan historian, forbidding anybody, under a severe punishment, from becoming Jew or Christian. But he who gives the blow is likely to speak of it more lightly than he who smarts under it; and we learn from the historian of the Church, that, in the tenth year of this reign, the Christians suffered a cruel persecution from their governors and their fellow-citizens. The persecution was general over the empire, and not confined to Egypt. There Christianity had caused no active disturbance to the government; but the Alexandrian Christians suffered with the rest. Among others who then lost their lives for their religion was Leonides, the father of Origen. He left seven orphan children, of whom the eldest, that justly celebrated writer, was only sixteen years old, but was already deeply read in the Holy Scriptures, and in the great writers of Greece. As the property of Leonides was forfeited, his children were left in poverty; but the young Origen was adopted by a wealthy lady, zealous for the new religion, by whose help he was enabled to continue his studies under Clemens. In order to read the Old Testament in the original, he made himself master of the Hebrew language, which was a study then very unusual among the Greeks, whether Jews or Christians.

Spartianus, Vit. Severi.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. A.D. 204.

(23) In this persecution of the Church all public worship was forbidden to the Christians; and Tertullian of Carthage eloquently complains that while the emperor allowed the Egyptians to worship cows, goats, or crocodiles, or indeed any animal they chose, he only

Tertullian. Apolog. xxiv.

punished those that bowed down before the Creator and Governor of the world. Of course, at this time of trouble the catechetical school was broken up and scattered, so that there was no public teaching of Christianity in Alexandria. But Origen ventured to do that privately which was forbidden to be done openly; and, when the storm had blown over, Demetrius, the bishop, appointed him to that office at the head of the school which he had already so bravely taken upon himself in the hour of danger. Origen could boast of several pupils who added their names to the noble list of martyrs who lost their lives for Christianity, among whom the best known was Plutarch, the brother of Heraclas. Origen afterwards removed for a time to Palestine, and fell under the displeasure of his own bishop for being there ordained a presbyter.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

(24) The charge of the catechetical school then fell to Heraclas, in whose hands it fully maintained its high character; and it was then that the custom began of foreign pupils coming to Alexandria to study Christianity. Among others Julius Africanus there studied under Heraclas. He was a native of Palestine, perhaps of Emmaus; and to gain further knowledge of Christianity he did not go to Galilee, where the Saviour himself had taught, nor to Antioch, where the apostles had been teaching, but he came to this seat of learning. Here he wrote his great work on chronology, to prove the antiquity of the true religion. In this he was chiefly guided by Manetho's history of Egypt. But his chronology is now for the most part lost, and known to us only in the pages of Eusebius and Syncellus; and thus our knowledge of Manetho's history is now chiefly gained by finding Africanus, who quoted him, himself quoted by those two writers.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. 31.

(25) In Egypt Severus seems to have dated the years of his reign from the death of Niger, though he had reigned in Rome since the deaths of Pertinax and Julian. His Egyptian coins are either copper, or brass plated with a little silver; and after a few reigns even those last traces of a silver coinage are lost in this falling country. In tracing the history of a word's meaning we often throw a light upon the customs of a nation. Thus, in Rome, gold was so far common that

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. Tochon, Medailles Egypt.

avarice was called the love of gold; while in Greece, where silver was the metal most in use, money was called *argurion.*

Epiphanius, De ponderibus.

In the same way it is curiously shown that silver was no longer used in Egypt, by our finding that the brass coin of one hundred and ten grains weight, as being the only piece of money seen in circulation, was named an *argurion.*

(26) The latter years of the reign of CARACALLA were spent in visiting the provinces of his wide empire; and after he had passed through Thrace and Asia Minor, Egypt had the misfortune to be honoured by a visit from its emperor. The satirical Alexandrians, who in the midst of their own follies and vices were always clever in lashing those of their rulers, had latterly been turning their unseemly jokes against Caracalla. They had laughed at his dressing like Achilles and Alexander the Great, while in his person he was below the usual height; and they had not forgotten his murder of his brother, and his talking of marrying his own mother. Some of these dangerous witticisms had reached his ears at Rome, and they were not forgotten. But Caracalla never showed his displeasure; and as he passed through Antioch he gave out that he was going to visit the city founded by Alexander the Great, and to consult the oracle in the temple of Serapis.

Herodianus, bb. iv. A.D. 211.

(27) The Alexandrians in their joy got ready the hecatombs for his sacrifices; and the emperor entered their city through rows of torches to the sound of soft music, while the air was sweetened with costly scents, and the road scattered with flowers. After a few days he sacrificed in the temple of Serapis, and then visited the tomb of Alexander, where he took off his scarlet cloak, his rings, and his girdle covered with precious stones, and dutifully laid them on the sarcophagus of the hero. The Alexandrians were delighted with their visitor; and crowds flocked into the city to witness the daily and nightly shows, little aware of the unforgiving malice that was lurking in his mind.

(28) The emperor then issued a decree that all the youths of Alexandria of an age to enter the army should meet him in a plain on the outside of the city; they had already a Macedonian and a Spartan phalanx, and he was going to

make an Alexandrian phalanx. Accordingly the plain was filled with thousands of young men, who were ranged in bodies according to their height, their age, and their fitness for bearing arms, while their friends and relations came in equal numbers to be witnesses of their honour. The emperor moved through their ranks, and was loudly greeted with their cheers, while the army which encircled the whole plain was gradually closing round the crowd and lessening the circle. When the ring was formed, Caracalla withdrew with his guards and gave the looked-for signal. The soldiers then lowered their spears and charged on the unarmed crowd, of whom a part were butchered and part driven headlong into the ditches and canals; and such was the slaughter that the waters of the Nile, which at midsummer are always red with the mud from the upper country, were said to have flowed coloured to the sea with the blood of the sufferers. Caracalla then returned to Antioch, congratulating himself on the revenge that he had taken on the Alexandrians for their jokes; not however till he had consecrated in the temple of Serapis the sword with which he boasted that he had slain his brother Geta. Dion Cassius, lib. lxxvii.

(29) Caracalla further punished the Alexandrians by stopping the public games and the allowance of corn to the citizens; and, to lessen the danger of their rebelling, he had the fortifications carried between the rest of the city and the great palace-quarter the Bruchium, thus dividing Alexandria into two fortified cities, with towers on the walls between them. Hitherto under the Romans, as under the Ptolemies, the Alexandrians had been the trusted favourites of their rulers, who made use of them to keep the Egyptians in bondage. But under Caracalla that policy was changed; the Alexandrians were treated as enemies; and we see for the first time Egyptians taking their seat in the Roman senate, and the Egyptian religion openly cultivated by the emperor, who then built a temple in Rome to the goddess Isis. Dion Cassius, lib. li. Spartianus.

(30) On the murder of Caracalla, MACRINUS, who was thought to be the author of his death, was acknowledged as emperor; and though he only reigned for about two months, yet, as the Egyptian new year's day fell within that time, we find Alex- J. Capitolinus. A.D. 217. Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

andrian coins for the first and second years of his reign. The Egyptians pretended that the death of Caracalla had been foretold by signs from heaven; that a ball of fire had fallen on the temple of Serapis, which destroyed nothing but the sword with which Caracalla had slain his brother; and that an Egyptian named Serapion, who had been thrown into a lion's den for naming Macrinus as the future emperor, had escaped unhurt by the wild beasts.

Dion Cassius, lib. lxxviii.

(31) Macrinus recalled from Alexandria Julian, the prefect of Egypt, and appointed to that post his friend Basilianus, with Marius Secundus, a senator, as second in command, who was the first senator that had ever held command in Egypt. He was himself at Antioch when Bassianus, a Syrian, pretending to be the son of Caracalla, offered himself to the legions as that emperor's successor. He is known by the name of ELAGABALUS. When the news reached Alexandria that the Syrian troops had joined the pretended Antoninus, the prefect Basilianus at once put to death the public couriers that brought the unwelcome tidings. But when, a few days afterwards, it was known that Macrinus had been defeated and killed, the doubts about his successor led to serious struggles between the troops and the Alexandrians. The Alexandrians could have had no love for a son of Caracalla; Basilianus and Secundus had before declared against him; but, on the other hand, the choice of the soldiers was guided by their brethren in Syria. The citizens flew to arms, and day after day was the battle fought in the streets of Alexandria between two parties, neither of whom was strong enough, even if successful, to have any weight in settling the fate of the Roman empire. Marius Secundus lost his life in the struggle. The prefect Basilianus fled to Italy to escape from his own soldiers; and the province of Egypt then followed the example of the rest of the East in acknowledging the new emperor.

Lampridius, Vita Heliogabali. Zoega, Num. Æg.

(32) For four years Rome was disgraced by the sovereignty of Elagabalus, the pretended son of Caracalla, and we find his coins each year in Alexandria. He was succeeded by the young ALEXANDER, whose amiable virtues however could not gain

for him the respect which he lost by the weakness of his government. The Alexandrians, always ready to lampoon their rulers, laughed at his wish to be thought a Roman; they called him the Syrian, the high-priest, and the ruler of the synagogue. And well might they think slightly of his government when a prefect of Egypt owed his appointment to the emperor's want of power to punish him. Epagathus had headed a mutiny of the prætorian guards in Rome, in which their general Ulpian was killed; and Alexander, afraid to punish the murderers, made the ringleader of the rebels prefect of Egypt in order to send him out of the way; so little did it then seem necessary to follow the cautious policy of Augustus, or to fear a rebellion in that province. But after a short time, when Epagathus had been forgotten by the Roman legion, he was removed to the government of Crete, and then at last punished with death.

Lampridius, Vita Alexandri. A.D. 222.

Dion Cassius, lib. lxxx.

(33) Potamo, a teacher of philosophy in Alexandria, had formerly tried, though with very little success, to unite the followers of Plato and Aristotle, by showing how far the doctrines of those two philosophers agreed. But in this reign he was followed in his attempt by Ammonius Saccas, who became the founder of a new and most important school of philosophy, that of the Alexandrian Platonists. It is much to be regretted that we know so little of a man who was able to work so great a change in the philosophy of the pagan world, and who had so great an influence on the opinions of the Christians. But he wrote nothing, and is only known to us through his pupils, in whose writings we trace the mind and system of the teacher. The most celebrated of these pupils were Plotinus, Herennius, and Origen, a pagan writer, together with Longinus, the great master of the "sublime," who owns him his teacher in elegant literature. Ammonius was unequalled in the variety and depth of his knowledge, and was by his followers called heaven-taught. He aimed at putting an end to the triflings and quarrels of the philosophers by showing that all the great truths were the same in each system, and by pointing out where Plato and Aristotle agreed instead of where they differed; or rather by culling opinions out of both

Diogenes Laertius, Proemium.

Suidas.

Porphyrius, Vit. Plotini.

Eunapius, Vit. Soph.

schools of philosophy, and by gathering together the scattered limbs of Truth, whose lovely form had been hewn to pieces and thrown to the four winds like the mangled body of Osiris.

(34) As a critic Ammonius walked in the very highest path, not counting syllables and marking faulty lines, like the followers of Aristarchus, but leading the pupils in his lecture-room to admire the beauties of the great authors, and firing them with the wish to rival them. He pointed out to them the passages in which Plato, to improve his style, had entered on a noble strife with Homer, and had tried in his prose to equal beauties of the poet which age after age had stamped with its approval. Of these lectures Longinus was a hearer, and to them we owe much of his golden treatise on the Sublime in writing, a treatise written to encourage authors in the aim after excellence, and to instruct them in the art of taking pains. This work of Longinus is the noblest piece of literary criticism which came forth from the Museum. In it we find the Old Testament quoted for the first time by a pagan writer; it is quoted for its style only, but we may thence reasonably suppose that it was not unknown to his great master Ammonius, and may have been of use to him in his lectures on philosophy, as indeed the Jewish opinions seem to have coloured the writings of his followers.

Longinus, Sect. xiii.

(35) Plotinus was born at Lycopolis, and, after studying philosophy for many years, he entered the school of Ammonius at the age of twenty-eight, where he studied for eleven years more. In the works of Plotinus we have the philosophy of the Greeks, freed from their mythology, taking up the form of a philosophical religion, a deism accompanied with a pure and high-toned morality, but clouded in all the darkness of metaphysics. Like the other Platonists, he enlarges on the doctrine of the trinity, though without using the word. He argues against the philosophy of the Gnostics, and points out that in calling the world evil, and the cause of evil, they were denying the goodness or power of the Creator, and lowering the model upon which their own characters were to be formed. He teaches that it is not enough for a man to have the virtues of society, or even to be without vices, but he must aim higher,

Porphyrius, Vit. Plotini.

and take God for his model; and that after all his pains he will still fall far short of his aim; for though one man may be like another as a picture is like a picture, yet a good man can only be like God as a copy is like the original.

(36) In the Greek mythology the gods were limited in their powers and knowledge; they were liable to mistakes, to vicious passions, and to change of purpose. Like mankind, whose concerns they rather meddled with than governed, they were themselves under the all-powerful laws of fate; and they seemed to have been looked upon as agents or servants of a deity, while the deity himself was wanting. It was round this unfortunate framework that the pagans entwined their hopes and fears, their feelings of human weakness, of devotion, of duty, and of religion. By the philosophers indeed this had been wholly thrown aside as a fable; but they had offered to the ignorant multitude nothing in its place. Those who sneered at the baseless system of the many raised no fabric of their own. It remained for the Alexandrian Platonists, borrowing freely from the Egyptians, the Jews, and the Christians, to offer to their followers the beautiful philosophy of Plato in a form more nearly approaching what we could call a religion. The overwhelming feeling of our own weakness, and of the debt which we owe to some unseen power above us, was not confined to the Christians, though perhaps strongly called into being by the spread of their religion. It was this feeling that gave birth to the New Platonism of the Alexandrians, which the pagans then raised up as a rival to the religion of the New Testament. The same spirit which led these Eclectic philosophers, in forming their own system, to make use of the doctrines of Aristotle as well as those of Plato, taught them to look also to Christianity for whatever would give a further strength to their philosophy. To swell the numbers of their forces, they counted among their allies many of the troops of the enemy. And in so doing they were followed unfortunately by the Christians, who, while they felt the strength of their own arguments and the superiority of their own philosophy, still, in order to help the approach of converts, and to lessen the distance which separated them from the philosophers, were willing to make large advances towards Platonism.

(37) But these pagan writers are hardly so well known as Origen, who on his return to Alexandria was the chief ornament of the Christian church. Origen was as well read in the poets and philosophers of Greece as in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures; and he pleaded the cause of his religion as well by the purity, piety, and humility of his life, as by the learning and ability of his writings. But he is now called a heretic because in his work on Prayer he writes against the custom of addressing prayers to Jesus. He has also been much blamed for arguing against the eternity of future punishments; as when men had not yet thought of making their own punishments lead to the amendment of the criminal, they did not see that they wronged their heavenly Father by thinking that his punishments were meant for vengeance. He reduced into a system the mystic method of interpreting the Scriptures which Philo and the Alexandrian Jews had used in their endeavour to make the Old Testament speak a meaning more agreeable to their philosophy. He said that every text has a threefold meaning, the historic, the moral, and the mystic, arising from the division of our powers into the bodily, the moral, and the intellectual; and he of course attached the greatest value to that sense which is furthest removed from the simple meaning of the words. The Old Testament was still the principal sacred volume of the Christians. Had Origen, like modern Christians, given his chief attention to the New Testament, he would perhaps have felt no need of this mode of interpretation, nor a wish to make the ancient records speak a more modern meaning. His chief work is his answer to Celsus, who had written an attack upon Christianity. Origen, however, was misled by the examples of Clemens and Ammonius, and like them attempted to unite with Christianity many of the dreams of Alexandrian Platonism. Indeed it is from the rise of the school of Ammonius, and from this spread of Platonism amongst the Christians, that we must date the wide division between Judaism and Christianity, which became broader and broader, till by the decrees of the council of Nicæa it was made into a gulf that now seems scarcely passable.

De Oratione, cap. 44.

Homil. in Levit. v.

(38) Whoever makes an effort to be useful is soon called upon to make a second effort to bear the disappointment of

his want of success. Such was the case with Origen; and in the tenth year of this reign he withdrew to Cæsarea, on finding himself made uncomfortable at Alexandria by the displeasure of Demetrius the bishop; and he left the care of the Christian school to Heraclas, who had been one of his pupils. Origen's opinions met with no blame in Cæsarea, where Christianity was not yet so far removed from its early simplicity as in Egypt. The Christians of Syria and Palestine highly prized his teaching when it was no longer valued in Alexandria. He died at Tyre in the reign of Gallus. Many of his writings are addressed to his friend Ambrosius, at whose persuasion they were written, and who had been recalled by him from the heresy of the Marcionites. Ambrosius was a deacon in the church and a rich man; he died before Origen, and was much blamed having left nothing by will to his friend, who was then old age and poverty.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

A.D. 231.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

(39) On the death of Demetrius, Heraclas, who had just before succeeded Origen in the charge of the Christian school, was chosen bishop of Alexandria; and Christianity had by that time so far spread through the cities of Upper and Lower Egypt that he found it necessary to ordain twenty bishops under him, while three had been found enough by his predecessor. From his being the head of the bishops, who were all styled fathers, Heraclas received the title of *Papa*, pope or grandfather, the title afterwards used by the bishops of Rome.

Eutychii Annales.

(40) Among the presbyters ordained by Heraclas was Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Platonic school; but he afterwards forsook the religion of Jesus; and we must not mistake him for a second Alexandrian Christian of the name of Ammonius, who can hardly have been the same person as the former, for he never changed his religion, and was the author of the Evangelical Canons, a work afterwards continued by Eusebius of Cæsarea.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

(41) Among the pagans of Alexandria we may mention Herodian, the author of a history of Rome from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to his own times. It is written in an elegant style, and is more particularly valuable for a period

of history where we have so few historians to guide us. He was the son of Apollonius, an author who had written largely on rhetoric and grammar, particularly on the dialects, tones, and accents.

Suidas.

(42) On the death of the Emperor Alexander, while Italy was torn to pieces by civil wars and by its generals' rival claims for the purple, the Alexandrians seem to have taken no part in the struggles, but to have acknowledged each emperor as soon as the news reached them that he had taken the title. In one year we find Alexandrian coins of MAXIMIN, and his son MAXIMUS, with those of the two GORDIANS, who for a few weeks reigned in Carthage, and in the next year we again have coins of Maximin and Maximus, with those of BALBINUS and PUPIENUS, and of GORDIANUS PIUS.

A.D. 235.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

A.D. 237.

A.D. 238.

(43) The Persians, taking advantage of the weakness in the empire caused by these civil wars, had latterly been harassing the eastern frontier; and it soon became the duty of the young Gordian to march against them in person. Hitherto the Roman armies had usually been successful; but unfortunately the Persians, or rather their Syrian and Arab allies, had latterly risen as much as the Romans had fallen off in courage and warlike skill. The army of Gordian was routed, and the emperor himself slain, either by traitors or by the enemy. Hereafter we shall see the Romans paying the just penalty for the example that they had set to the surrounding nations. They had taught them that conquest should be a people's chief aim, that the great use of strength was to crush a neighbour; and it was not long before Egypt and the other eastern provinces suffered under the same treatment. So little had a defeat been expected that the philosopher Plotinus had left his studies in Alexandria to join the army, in hopes of gaining for himself an insight into the eastern philosophy that was so much talked of in Egypt. After the rout of the army he with difficulty escaped to Antioch, and thence he removed to Rome, where he taught the New Platonism to scholars of all nations, including Serapion the rhetorician, and Eustochius the physician, from Alexandria.

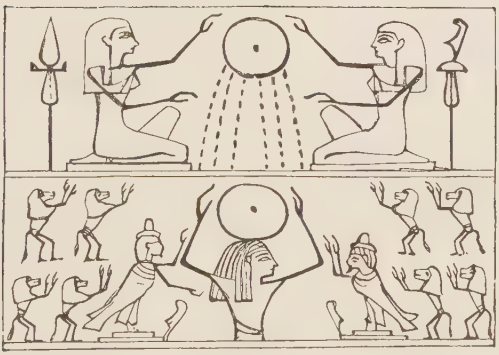
Porphyrius, Vit. Plotini.

(44) PHILIP, who is accused by the historians of being the author of Gordian's death, succeeded him on the throne; but he is only known in the history of Egypt by his Alexandrian coins, which we find with the dates of each of the seven years of his reign, and these seem to prove that for one year he had been associated with Gordian in the purple.

Capitolinus, vita Gordiani.

A.D. 243.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.



A man and his wife worshipping the sun above; and their two souls worshipping it in the regions below.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE REIGNS OF DECIUS, GALLUS, VALERIAN, GALLIENUS (REBELLION), CLAUDIUS, AURELIAN (REBELLION), TACITUS, PROBUS (REBELLION), CARUS, DIOCLETIAN (THE GREAT REBELLION), GALERIUS, AND LICINIUS. A.D. 249—323.

(1) In the reign of Decius the Christians of Egypt were again harassed by the zeal with which the laws against their religion were put in force. The reason for the jealousy against them we may in part learn from the political state of the country. Christianity addresses itself to the poor, it overlooks the distinctions of rank, it raises the servant in his own eyes to a level with his richer master, and the barbarian to an equality with the more educated Greek. "Neither is there Jew nor Greek, neither is there slave nor freeman," says the ancient hymn, for with God there is no respect of persons. Such an opinion had been naturally welcome to the oppressed Egyptians. They were beginning to hold up their heads as free-born men, to question Greek superiority, and to give trouble to a government based upon the traditional belief that all who were not Greeks or Romans were slaves. The Greeks, though tolerant of all religions, could not tolerate this. Christianity had to bear the blame of an increasing difficulty in governing the country; and the Alexandrian Christians, who taught these levelling opinions to the Egyptians, could only be looked upon as traitors against Greek supremacy.

Galat. iii. 28.

(2) The persecution began by their fellow-citizens informing against them; but in the next year it was followed up by the prefect Æmilianus; and several Christians were summoned before the magistrate and put to death. Many fled for safety to the desert and to Mount Sinai, where they fell into a danger of a different kind; they were taken prisoners by the Saracens and carried away as slaves. Dionysius the bishop of Alexandria himself fled from the storm, and was then banished to the village of Cephro in the western desert, three days' journey from

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

A.D. 249.

Dionysius, ap. Synccllum.

A.D. 250.

Parætonium. But his flight was not without some scandal to the church, as there were not a few who thought that he was called upon by his rank at least to await, if not to court the pains of martyrdom. Indeed the persecution was less remarkable for the sufferings of the Christians than for the numbers who failed in their courage, and renounced Christianity under the threats of the magistrate. Dionysius the bishop, who had shown no courage himself, was willing to pardon their weakness, and after fit proof of sorrow again to receive them as brethren. But his humanity offended the zeal of many whose distance from the danger had saved them from temptation; and it was found necessary to summon a council at Rome to settle the dispute. In this assembly the moderate party prevailed; and some who refused to receive back those who had once fallen away from the faith were themselves turned out of the church.

(3) Dionysius had succeeded Heraclas in the bishopric, having before succeeded him as head of the catechetical school. He was the author of several works, written in defence of the trinitarian opinions, on the one hand against the Egyptian Gnostics, who said that there were eight, and even thirty persons in the Godhead, and, on the other hand, against the Syrian bishop Paul of Samosata on the Euphrates, who said that Jesus was a man, and that the Word and Holy Spirit were not persons, but attributes of God. But while Dionysius was thus engaged in a controversy with such opposite opinions, Egypt and Libya were giving birth to a new view of the trinity. Sabellius bishop of Ptolemais near Cyrene was putting forth the opinion that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were only three names for the one God, and that the Creator of the world had himself appeared upon earth in the form of Jesus. Against this opinion Dionysius again engaged in controversy, arguing against Sabellius that Jesus was not the Creator but the first of created beings. Thus, while Paul of Samosata said that Jesus was only a man, Sabellius said that he was the almighty Creator; and though starting from such opposite points they met together in the belief of the strict unity of God.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

Theodoret, Hæretic. ii.

Apud Synodum.

(4) The Christians were thus in each generation changing further and further from the simple truths which had been

preached to the fishermen on the Lake of Galilee; sometimes leaning towards Greek polytheism and sometimes towards Egyptian mysticism. In proportion as the religion spread among the Egyptians, in the same degree it took a more Egyptian form. As in each quarrel the most mysterious opinions were thought the most sacred, each generation added new mysteries to its religion; and the progress was rapid, from a practical piety to a profession of opinions which they did not pretend to understand.

(5) During the reigns of GALLUS, of ÆMILIUS ÆMILIANUS, and of VALERIAN, the Alexandrians coined money in the name of each emperor as soon as the news reached Egypt that he had made Italy acknowledge his title. Gallus and his son reigned two years and four months; Æmilianus, who rebelled in Pannonia, reigned three months; and Valerian reigned about six years.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. A.D. 252. Eusebii Chronicon. A.D. 254. A. Victor.

(6) Egypt, as a trading country, now suffered severely from the want of order and quiet government; and in particular since the reign of Alexander Severus it had been kept in a fever by rebellions, persecutions, and this unceasing change of rulers. Change brings the fear of change; and this fear checks trade, throws the labourer out of employment, and leaves the poor of the cities without wages, and without food. Famine is always followed by disease; and Egypt and Alexandria were visited in the reign of Gallus by a dreadful plague, one of those scourges that force themselves on the notice of the historian. It was probably the same disease that in a less frightful form has been not uncommon in that country and in the lower parts of Syria. The physician Aretæus describes it under the name of ulcers on the tonsils. The unhappy sufferer was tortured at the same time with heat and cold. He breathed with pain; and his breath was so putrid that he could not bear his own smell. The face became discoloured and ghastly. The acuteness of the fever made the thirst extreme; and yet the wretched man was afraid to drink, for fear of the pain occasioned by swallowing. If he ventured to put a draught of water into his mouth, it was immediately thrown out at the nostrils with

Eusebii Chronicon. De Morbis Acutis, lib. i.

convulsive struggles. He was unable either to lie down or sit, but walked about in melancholy uneasiness, shunned by everybody, and he usually died in violent pain. It seems by the letters of Bishop Dionysius that in Alexandria the population had so much fallen off that the inhabitants between the ages of fourteen and eighty were not more than those between forty and seventy had been formerly, as appeared by old records then existing. The misery that the city had suffered may be measured by its lessened numbers. Eusebius Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. 20

(7) During these latter years the eastern half of the empire was chiefly guarded by Odenathus of Palmyra, the brave and faithful ally of Rome, under whose wise rule his country for a short time held a rank among the great empires of the world, which it never could have gained but for an union of many favourable circumstances. The city and little state of Palmyra is situated in the desert of Syria, between Damascus and Babylon, one hundred and seventy-six Roman miles from the one and nearly twice as far from the other, and is remarkable for the richness of its soil and its pleasant streams, while surrounded on every side by vast plains of barren sands. Thus separated from the rest of the world, between the Roman and the Parthian empires, it had long kept its freedom, while each of those great rival powers rather courted its friendship than aimed at conquering it. But, as the cause of Rome grew weaker, Odenathus wisely threw his weight into the lighter scale; and latterly, without aiming at conquest, he found himself almost the sovereign of those provinces of the Roman empire which were in danger of being overrun by the Persians. Valerian himself was conquered, taken prisoner, and put to death by Sapor, king of Persia; and Gallienus his son, who was idling away his life in disgraceful pleasures in the west, wisely gave the title of emperor to Odenathus, and declared him his colleague on the throne. Pliny, lib. v. 21. Tr. Pollio, Vit. Gallieni. A.D. 260.

(8) No sooner was Valerian taken prisoner than every province of the Roman empire, feeling the sword powerless in the weak hands of Gallienus, declared its own general emperor; and when Macrianus, who had been left in command in Syria, gathered together Tr. Pollio, XXX. Tyranni. A.D. 260.

the scattered forces of the eastern army, and made himself emperor of the East, the Egyptians owned him as their sovereign. As Macrianus found his age too great for the activity required of a rebel emperor, he made his two sons, Macrianus junior and Quietus, his colleagues; and we find their names on the coins of Alexandria dated the first and second years of their reign. But Macrianus was defeated by Domitianus at the head of a part of the army of Aureolus, who had made himself emperor in Illyricum, and he lost his life, together with one of his sons, while the other soon afterwards met with the same fate from Odenathus.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(9) After this, Egypt was governed for a short time in the name of GALLIENUS; but the fickle Alexandrians soon made a rebel emperor for themselves. The Roman republic, says the historian, was often in danger from the headstrong giddiness of the Alexandrians. Any civility forgotten, a place in the baths not yielded, a heap of rubbish, or even a pair of old shoes in the streets, was often enough to throw the state into the greatest danger, and make it necessary to call out the troops to put down the riots. Thus, one day one of the prefect's slaves was beaten by the soldiers, for saying that his shoes were better than theirs. On this a riotous crowd gathered round the house of Æmilianus to complain of the conduct of his soldiers. He was attacked with stones and such weapons as are usually within the reach of a mob. He had no choice but to call out the troops, who, when they had quieted the city and were intoxicated with their success, saluted him with the title of emperor; and hatred of Gallienus made the rest of the Egyptian army agree to their choice.

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Æmiliani.

A.D. 265.

(10) The new emperor called himself Alexander, and was even thought to deserve the name. He governed Egypt during his short reign with great vigour. He led his army through the Thebaid, and drove back the barbarians with a courage and activity which had latterly been uncommon in the Egyptian army. Alexandria then sent no tribute to Rome. "Well! cannot we live without Egyptian linen?" was the forced joke of Gallienus, when the Romans were in alarm at the loss of the usual

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Gallieni.

supply of corn. But Æmilianus was soon beaten by Theodotus, the general of Gallienus, who besieged him in the strong quarter of Alexandria called the Bruchium, and then took him prisoner and strangled him.

(11) During this siege the ministers of Christianity were able to lessen some of the horrors of war by persuading the besiegers to allow the useless mouths to quit the blockaded fortress. Eusebius, afterwards bishop of Laodicea, was without the trenches trying to lessen the cruelties of the siege; and Anatolius, the Christian Peripatetic, was within the walls, endeavouring to persuade the rebels to surrender. Gallienus, in gratitude to his general, would have granted him the honour of a proconsular triumph, to dazzle the eyes of the Alexandrians; but the policy of Augustus was not wholly forgotten, and the emperor was reminded by the priests that it was unlawful for the consular fasces to enter Alexandria.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. vii. 32.

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Æmiliani.

(12) The late Emperor Valerian had begun his reign with mild treatment of the Christians; but he was over-persuaded by the Alexandrians. He then allowed the power of the magistrate to be used, in order to check the Christian religion. But in this weakness of the empire, Gallienus could no longer with safety allow the Christians to be persecuted for their religion. Both their numbers and their station made it dangerous to treat them as enemies; and the emperor ordered all persecution to be stopped. The imperial rescript for that purpose was even addressed to "Dionysius, Pinna, Demetrius, and the other bishops;" it grants them full indulgence in the exercise of their religion, and by its very address almost acknowledges their rank in the state. By this edict of Gallienus the Christians were put on a better footing than at any time since their numbers brought them under the notice of the magistrate.

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

(13) When the Bishop Dionysius returned to Alexandria, he found the place sadly ruined by the late siege. The middle of the city was a vast waste. It was easier, he says, to go from one end of Egypt to the other than to cross the main street which divided the Bruchium from the western end of Alexandria. The place

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. vii. 21.

was still marked with all the horrors of last week's battle. Then, as usual, disease and famine followed upon war. Not a house was without a funeral. Death was everywhere to be seen in its most ghastly form. Bodies were left unburied in the streets, to be eaten by the dogs. Men ran away from their sickening friends in fear. As the sun set they felt in doubt whether they should be alive to see it rise in the morning. Cowards hid their alarms in noisy amusements and laughter. Not a few in very despair rushed into riot and vice. But the Christians clung to one another in brotherly love; they visited the sick; they laid out and buried their dead; and many of them thereby caught the disease themselves, and died as martyrs to the strength of their faith and love.

(14) The short rebellions of Macrianus and Alexander Æmilianus had made no break in the series of Alexandrian coins in the name of Gallienus. We have them for every year of his reign of sixteen years, from the death of Æmilius Æmilianus, when he was made emperor by his father Valerian.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(15) In these times of war and rebellion, the schools, whether Christian or pagan, fell off in scholars and in learning; but we may mention with honour Anatolius, whom we have just spoken of at the siege of the Bruchium. He attempted to revive the Peripatetic school in Alexandria; and, by taking the opinions of Aristotle as his base, and joining thereto such doctrines, Christian as well as pagan, as he thought true, he wished to do for Aristotle what Ammonius and Plotinus had done so successfully for Plato. Anatolius was no doubt in part moved towards the study of Aristotle's colder philosophy by the zeal which the pagan school of Ammonius had shown towards the opinions of Plato. He was probably not very successful in his attempt; but he was afterwards followed by others, and we shall hereafter see with regret that the Christians, leaving Plato to their enemies, confined themselves to the study of Aristotle. Anatolius wrote largely on mathematics and astronomy, and on the true time of Easter; and some years afterwards he succeeded Eusebius of Alexandria in the bishopric of Laodicea. We may also mention Pierius, another presbyter of the Alexandrian church, whose

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

learned and elegant writings gained him the name of the Younger Origen, and who, when Dionysius was made bishop of Alexandria, filled the professor's chair in the catechetical school, with credit to himself and usefully to the cause of religion. Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell.

(16) At the same time Nepos, one of the Egyptian bishops, wrote his work against the Allegorists, who found a second and spiritual meaning in the Scripture history, and in favour of the millennium, or the expected reign of Christ upon earth for the space of one thousand years; in support of which opinion he quoted the Book of Revelation. Against this heresy Dionysius, as his superior bishop, wrote an epistle, in which he even denied the authority of the Book of Revelation, and gave it as his opinion that it was not written by John the Apostle; while many thought that it was written by Cerinthus the Gnostic, who was known to have held the same view of the millennium. Dionysius died in the twelfth year of this reign, at a great age, having been too old to attend the synod of Antioch, where Paul of Samosata was condemned as a heretic. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

(17) About this time Porphyry was at the head of the school of Alexandrian Platonists, as the pupil of Plotinus and the successor of Ammonius. But though the school and the philosophy took its name from the city of its founder, Porphyry lived for some time in Rome, as the rebellions in Alexandria made it a very unfit place for a philosophical school. He was an admirer of the Egyptian philosophy; and one of his works on the nature of demons, and about the true path to happiness, as taught in the Books of Thoth, was in the form of an epistle to Nectanebo, an Egyptian priest. He has left a treatise entitled, On the Cave of the Nymphs, and a second On Abstinence. His short history, or rather chronology, of the Ptolemies is of the greatest value, and its exactness is proved by several eclipses which have been recorded by the Alexandrian astronomers, and calculated by the help of modern science. To Porphyry we also owe some of the notes on Homer, known under the name of the Scholia, which seem to have been written while he was a student in the Museum at Alexandria, where it was Suidas. Eusebius, Præp. Evan. lib. xiv. 10. Valckenaer, De codice Leidensi.

usual to exercise the pupils by questions on the great epic poet, and for them to give their answers to the professor in writing.

(18) As long as Odenathus lived, the victories of the Palmyrenes were always over the enemies of Rome; but on the assassination of himself and his son Herodes, though the armies of Palmyra were still led to battle with equal courage, its counsels were no longer guided with the same moderation. Zenobia, the widow of Odenathus, seized the command of the army for herself and her infant sons Herennius and Timolaus; and her masculine courage and stern virtues well qualified her for the bold task that she had undertaken. She threw off the friendship of Rome, and routed the armies which Gallienus sent against her, and claiming to be descended from Cleopatra, she marched upon Egypt to seize the throne of her ancestors, and to add that kingdom to Syria and Asia Minor, which she already possessed.

Trebonius Pollio.

A.D. 268.

(19) It was in the last year of the reign of Gallienus that Zenobia, the queen of Palmyra, sent an army against Egypt. It was led by her general Zabda, who was joined by an Egyptian named Timogenes; and, with seventy thousand Palmyrenes, Syrians, and other barbarians, they routed the Roman army of fifty thousand Egyptians under Probatus. The unfortunate Roman general put an end to his own life; but nevertheless the Palmyrenes were unsuccessful, and Egypt followed the example of Rome and took the oaths to CLAUDIUS. For three years the coins of Alexandria bear the name of that emperor.

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Claudii.

Zosimus, lib. i.

A.D. 268.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(20) On the death of Claudius, his brother QUINTILLUS assumed the purple in Europe; and though he only reigned for seventeen days the Alexandrian moneyers found time to engrave dies and to coin money in his name.

Fr. Pollio.

A.D. 270.

(21) On the death of Claudius also, the Palmyrenes renewed their attacks upon Egypt, and this second time with

success. The whole kingdom acknowledged ZENOBIA as their queen; and in the fourth and fifth years of her reign in Palmyra we find her name on the Alexandrian coins (see Fig. 113). The Greeks, who had been masters of Egypt for six hundred years, ever since the time of Alexander the Great, either in their own name or in that of the Roman emperors, were then for the first time governed by an Asiatic. Palmyra in the desert was then ornamented with the spoils of Egypt; and travellers yet admire the remains of eight large columns of red porphyry, each thirty feet high, which stood in front of the two gates to the great temple. They speak for themselves, and tell their own history. From their material and form and size we must suppose that these columns were quarried between Thebes and the Red Sea, were cut into shape by Egyptian workmen under the guidance of Greek artists in the service of the Roman emperors; and were thence carried

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Fig. 113.

away by the Syrian queen to the oasis-city in the desert between Damascus and Babylon.

(22) Zenobia was a handsome woman of a dark complexion, with an aquiline nose, quick piercing eyes, and a masculine voice. She had the commanding qualities of Cleopatra, from whom her flatterers traced her descent, and she was without her vices. She could not speak so many languages as flattery had attributed to that fascinating queen; but while Syriac was her native tongue, she was not ignorant of Latin, which she was careful to have taught to her children; she carried on her government in Greek, and could speak Coptic with the Egyptians, whose history she had studied and written upon. In her dress and manners she joined the pomp of the Persian court to the self-denial and military virtues of a camp. With these qualities, followed by a success in arms which they

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Zenobiæ.

seemed to deserve, the world could not help remarking, that while Gallienus was wasting his time with fiddlers and players, in idleness that would have disgraced a woman, Zenobia was governing her half of the empire like a man.

(23) Zenobia made Antioch and Palmyra the capitals of her empire, and Egypt became for the time a province of Syria. Her religion like her language was Syriac. The name of her husband, Odenathus, means the Desire of the goddess Adoneth, and that of her son Vaballathus means the Desire of the goddess Baaleth. But as her troops were many of them Saracens or Arabs, a people nearly the same as the Blemmyes, who already formed part of the people of Upper Egypt, this conquest gave a new rank to that part of the population, and made them less quiet thereafter in their slavery to the Greeks of Alexandria.

(24) But the sceptre of Rome had lately been grasped by the firmer hand of AURELIAN, and the reign of Zenobia drew to a close. Aurelian at first granted her the title of his colleague in the empire, and we find Alexandrian coins with her head on one side and his on the other. But he lost no time in leading his forces into Syria, and, after routing Zenobia's army in one or two battles, he took her prisoner at Emessa. He then led her to Rome, where, after being made the ornament of his triumph, she was allowed to spend the rest of her days in quiet, having reigned for four years in Palmyra, though only for a few months in Egypt.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Aureliani.

(25) On the defeat of Zenobia it would seem that Egypt and Syria were still left under the government of one of her sons, with the title of colleague of Aurelian. The Alexandrian coins are then dated in the first year of Aurelian and the fourth of VABALLATHUS, or, according to the Greek translation of this name, of ATHENODORUS, who counted his years from the death of Odenathus (see Fig. 114).

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. A.D. 270.

(26) The young Herodes, who had been killed with his father Odenathus, was not the son of Zenobia, but of a former wife, and Zenobia always acted towards him with the unkindness unfortunately too common in a stepmother. She had claimed the throne for her infant

Tr. Pollio, Vit. Herod.

sons Herennius and Timolaus; and we are left in doubt by the historians about Vaballathus; Vopiscus, who calls him the son of Zenobia, does not tell us who was his father. We know but little of him beyond his coins; but from these we learn that, after reigning one

Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Aureliani.

Fig. 114.

year with Aurelian, he aimed at reigning alone, took the title of Augustus, and dropped the name of Aurelian from his coins. This step was most likely the cause of his overthrow and death, which happened in the same year.

A.D. 271.

(27) On the overthrow of Zenobia's family, Egypt, which had been so fruitful in rebels, submitted to the Emperor Aurelian, but it was only for a few months. The Greeks of Alexandria, now lessened in numbers, were found to be no longer masters of the kingdom. Former rebellions in Egypt had been caused by the two Roman legions and the Greek mercenaries sometimes claiming the right to appoint an emperor to the Roman world; but Zenobia's conquest had raised the Egyptian and Arab population in their own opinion, and they were no longer willing to be governed by an Alexandrian or European master. They set up Firmus, a Syrian, a native of Seleucia, who took the title of emperor; and resting his power on that part of the population that had been treated as slaves or barbarians for six hundred years, he aimed at the conquest of Alexandria.

Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Firmi.

A.D. 272.

(28) Firmus was a man of great size and bodily strength, and of coarse, barbarian manners. He had gained great wealth by trading to India; and had a paper trade so profitable that he used to boast that he could feed an army on papyrus and glue. His house was furnished with glass windows, a luxury then but little known, and the squares of glass were

fastened into the frames by means of bitumen. His chief strength was in the Arabs or Blemmyes of Upper Egypt, and in the Saracens who had lately been fighting against Rome under the standard of Zenobia. Firmus fixed his government at Coptos and Ptolemais, and held all Upper Egypt; but he either never conquered Alexandria, or did not hold it for many months, as for every year that he reigned in the Thebaid we find Alexandrian coins bearing the name of Aurelian. Firmus was at last conquered by Aurelian in person, who took him prisoner, and had him tortured and then put to death. During these troubles Rome had been thrown into alarm at the thoughts of losing the usual supply of Egyptian corn, as since the reign of Elagabalus the Roman granaries had never held more than was wanted for the year; but Aurelian hastened to write word to the Roman people that the country was again quiet, and that the yearly supplies which had been delayed by the wickedness of Firmus would soon arrive safe. Had Firmus raised the Roman legions in rebellion, he would have been honoured with the title of a rebel emperor; but, as his power rested on the Egyptians and Arabs, Aurelian only boasted that he had rid the world of a robber.

Vopiscus, Vit. Probi.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(29) Another rebel emperor about this time was Domitius Domitianus; but we have no certain knowledge of the year in which he rebelled, nor, indeed, without the help of the coins, should we know in what province of the whole Roman empire he had assumed the purple. The historian only tells us that in the reign of Aurelian the general Domitianus was put to death, for aiming at a change. We learn, however, from the coins, that he reigned for parts of a first and a second year in Egypt; but the subject of his reign is not without its difficulties, as we find Alexandrian coins of Domitianus with Latin inscriptions, and dated in the third year of his reign (see Fig. 115). The Latin language had not at this time been used on the coins of Alexandria; and he could not have held Alexandria for any one whole year, as the series of Aurelian's coins is not broken. It is possible that the Latin coins of Domitianus may belong to a second and later usurper of the same name.

Zosimus, lib. i. 49.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Numism. Pembroch.

(30) Aurelian had reigned in Rome from the death of Claudius; and, notwithstanding the four rebels to whom we have given the title of sovereigns of Egypt, money was coined in Alexandria in his name during each of those years. His coinage, however, reminds us of the troubled and fallen state of the country; and from this time forward copper, or rather brass, is the only metal used.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt. Tochon, Medailles Egypt.

Fig. 115.

(31) Aurelian left Probus in the command of the Egyptian army, and that general's skill and activity found full employment in driving back the barbarians who pressed upon the province on each of the three sides on which it was open to attack. His first battles were against the Africans and Marmaridæ, who were in arms on the side of Cyrene; and he next took the field against the Palmyrenes and Saracens, who still claimed Egypt in the name of the family of Zenobia. He employed the leisure of his soldiers in many useful works; in repairing bridges, temples, and porticoes, and more particularly in widening the trenches and keeping open the canals, and in such other works as were of use in raising and forwarding the yearly supply of corn to Rome. Aurelian increased the amount of the Egyptian tribute, which was paid in glass, paper, linen, hemp, and corn; the latter he increased by one twelfth part, and he placed a larger number of ships on the voyage to make the supply certain.

Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Probi.

(32) The Christians were well treated during this reign, and their patriarch Nero so far took courage as to build the church of St. Mary in Alexandria. This was probably the first church that was built in Egypt

Eutychii Annales.

for the public service of Christianity, which for two hundred years had been preached in private rooms, and very often in secret. The service was in Greek, as indeed it was in all parts of Egypt; for it does not appear that Christian prayers were publicly read in the Egyptian language before the quarrel between the two churches made the Copts unwilling to use Greek prayers. The Liturgy there read was probably very nearly the same as that afterwards known as the Liturgy of St. Mark. This is among the oldest of the Christian liturgies, and it shows its country by the prayer that the waters of the river may rise to their just measure, and that rain may be sent from heaven to the countries that need it.

Renaudot, Liturgiæ Orientales.

(33) We learn from the historians that eight months were allowed to pass between the death of Aurelian and the choice of a successor; and during this time the power rested in the hands of his widow. The sway of a woman was never openly acknowledged in Rome, but the Alexandrians and Egyptians were used to female rule, and from the Alexandrian coins we learn that in Egypt the government was carried on in the name of the Empress Severina. The last coins of Aurelian bear the date of the

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Fig. 116.

sixth year of his reign, and the coins of Severina are dated in the sixth and seventh years (see Fig. 116). But after TACITUS was chosen emperor by his colleagues of the Roman senate, and during his short reign of six months, his authority was obeyed by the Egyptian legions under Probus, as is fully proved by the Alexandrian coins bearing his name, all dated in the first year of his reign.

Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Taciti.

A.D. 276.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

(34) On the death of Tacitus his brother Florian hoped to succeed to the imperial power, and was acknowledged by the senate and troops of Rome. But when the news reached Egypt, it was at once felt by the legions that PROBUS, both by his own personal qualities and by the high state of discipline of the army under his command, and by his success against the Egyptian rebels, had a better claim to the purple than any other general. At first the opinion ran round the camp in a whisper, and at last the army spoke the general wish aloud; they snatched a purple cloak from a statue in one of the temples to throw over him, they placed him on an earthen mound as a tribunal, and against his will saluted him with the title of emperor. The choice of the Egyptian legions was soon approved of by Asia Minor, Syria, and Italy; Florian was put to death, and Probus shortly afterwards marched into Gaul and Germany, to quiet those provinces. Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Probi. A.D. 276.

(35) After a year or two, Probus was recalled into Egypt by hearing that the Blemmyes had risen in arms, and that Upper Egypt was again independent of the Roman power. Not only Coptos, which had for centuries been an Arab city, but even Ptolemais, the Greek capital of the Thebaid, was now peopled by those barbarians, and they had to be reconquered by Probus as foreign cities, and kept in obedience by Roman garrisons; and on his return to Rome he thought his victories over the Blemmyes of Upper Egypt not unworthy of a triumph.

(36) By these unceasing wars, the Egyptian legions had lately been brought into a high state of discipline; and confident in their strength, and in the success with which they had made their late general emperor of the Roman world, they now attempted to raise up a rival to him in the person of their present general Saturninus. Saturninus had been made general of the eastern frontier by Aurelian, who had given him strict orders never to enter Egypt. "The Egyptians," says the historian, meaning, however, the Alexandrians, "are boastful, vain, spiteful, licentious, fond of change, clever in making songs and epigrams against their rulers, and much given to soothsaying and augury." Aurelian well knew that the loyalty of a successful general was not to be trusted in Egypt, and during Fl. Vopiscus, in Vit. Saturnini.

his lifetime Saturninus never entered that province. But after his death, when Probus was called away to the other parts of the empire, the government of Egypt was added to the other duties of Saturninus; and no sooner was he seen there, at the head of an army that seemed strong enough to enforce his wishes, than the fickle Alexandrians saluted him with the title of emperor and Augustus. But Saturninus was a wise man, and shunned the dangerous honour; he had hitherto fought always for his country; he had saved the provinces of Spain, Gaul, and Africa from the enemy or from rebellion; and he knew the value of his rank and character too well to fling it away for a bauble. To escape from further difficulties, he withdrew from Egypt, and moved his head-quarters into Palestine. But the treasonable cheers of the Alexandrians could neither be forgotten by himself nor by his troops; he had withstood the calls of ambition, but he yielded at last to his fears; he became a rebel for fear of being thought one, and he declared himself emperor as the safest mode of escaping punishment. But he was soon afterwards defeated and strangled, against the will of the forgiving Probus.

(37) On the death of Probus, the empire fell to CARUS and his sons NUMERIANUS and CARINUS, whose names are found on the Alexandrian coins, but whose short reigns have left no other trace in Egypt. At this time also we find upon the coins the name of Trajan's second Egyptian legion, which was at all times stationed in Egypt, and which, acting upon an authority usually granted to the legions in the provinces, coined money for their own

A.D. 283.

Zoega, Numi Ægypt.

Dion Cassius, lib. lv. 24.

Fig. 117.

pay (see Fig. 117). The soldiers, by gaining this privilege of coining for themselves, were able to get their wages paid

in good money, while the other payments by the government were made in lighter coin.

(38) The reign of DIOCLETIAN was one of sad suffering and trouble to the unhappy Egyptians; and in the fourth year the people of Upper Egypt rose in open war against the Roman government, and gave the title of emperor to Achilleus, their leader in the rebellion. Galerius, the Roman general, led an army against the rebels, and marched through the whole of the Thebaid; but though the Egyptians were routed whenever they were bold enough to meet the legions in battle, yet the rebellion was not very easily crushed. The Romans were scarcely obeyed beyond the spot on which their army was encamped. In the fourth year of the rebellion, Diocletian came to Egypt, and the cities of Coptos and Busiris were besieged by the emperor in person, and wholly destroyed after a regular siege.

A.D. 285. Zonaras, lib. ii. Eusebii Chronicon.

A.D. 292.

(39) When Diocletian reached the southern limits of Egypt, he was able to judge of the difficulty, and indeed the uselessness, of trying to hold any part of Ethiopia; and he found that the tribute levied there was less than the cost of the troops required to collect it. He therefore made a new treaty with the Nobatæ, as the people between the first and second cataracts were now called. He gave up to them the whole of Lower Ethiopia, or the province called Nubia. The valley for twelve schœni, or seventy miles, above Syene, which bore the name of the Dodecaschœnos, had been held by Augustus and his successors, and this was now given up to the original inhabitants. Diocletian strengthened the fortifications on the isle of Elephantine, to guard what was thenceforth the uttermost point of defence, and agreed to pay to the Nobatæ and Blemmyes a yearly sum of gold on the latter promising no longer to harass Upper Egypt with their marauding inroads, and on the former promising to forbid the Blemmyes from doing so. What remains of the Roman wall built against the inroads of these troublesome neighbours runs along the edge of the cultivated land on the east side of the river for some distance to the north of the cataract.

Procopius, Persic. i. 19.

(40) But so much was the strength of the Greek party

lessened, and so deeply rooted among the Egyptians was their hatred of their rulers and the belief that they should then be able to throw off the yoke, that soon afterwards Alexandria declared in favour of Achilleus, and Diocletian was again called to Egypt to regain the capital. Such was the strength of the rebels that the city could not be taken without a regular siege. Diocletian surrounded it with a ditch and wall, and turned aside the canals that supplied the citizens with water. After a tedious siege of eight months, Alexandria was at last taken by storm, and Achilleus was put to death. A large part of the city was burnt at the storming, nor would the punishment of the citizens have there ended, but for Diocletian's humane interpretation of an accident. The horse on which he sat stumbled as he entered the city with his troops, and he had the humanity to understand it as a command from heaven that he should stop the pillage of the city; and the citizens in gratitude erected near the spot a bronze statue of the horse, to which they owed so much. This statue, whether of the horse, or of the emperor on horseback, as we may rather suppose it to have been, has long since been lost, but we cannot be mistaken in the place where it stood. The lofty column in the centre of the temple of Serapis, now well known by the name of Pompey's pillar, once held a statue on the top, and on the base it still bears the inscription of the grateful citizens, "To the most honoured emperor, the saviour of Alexandria, the unconquerable Diocletian" (see Fig. 118).

Eusebii Chronicon. J. Malala. Eutropius, lib. ix. A.D. 297. J. Malala. Wilkinson, Thebes.

Fig. 118.

(41) This rebellion had lasted more than nine years, and the Egyptians seemed never in want of money for the purposes of the war. Diocletian was struck with their riches, and he ordered a careful search to be made through Egypt for all writings on alchemy, an art which the Egyptians studied together with magic and astrology. These books he ordered to be burnt, under a belief that they were the great sources of the wealth by which his own power had

Suidas.

been resisted. Want and misery no doubt caused this rebellion, but the rebellion certainly caused further want and misery. The navigation of the Nile was stopped, the canals were no longer kept clear, the fields were badly tilled, trade and manufactures were ruined. Since the rebellions against the Persians, Egypt had never suffered so much. It had been sadly changed by the troubles of the last sixty years, during which it had been six times in arms against Rome; and when the great rebellion was put down by Diocletian, it was no longer the same country that it had been under the Antonines. The frame-work of society had been shaken, the Greeks had lessened in numbers, and still more in weight. The fall of the Ptolemies, and the conquest by Rome, did not make so great a change. The bright days of Egypt as a Greek kingdom began with the building of Alexandria, and ended with the rebellions against Gallienus, Aurelian, and Diocletian. The native Egyptians, both Copts and Arabs, now rise into notice, but only because Greek civilisation sinks around them. And soon the upper classes among the Copts, to avoid the duty of maintaining a family of children in such troubled times, rush by thousands into monasteries and convents, and further lessen the population by their religious vows of celibacy.

(42) Diocletian perhaps did not think it wise to inquire how far the Alexandrian Greeks, the favoured citizens, had joined their Egyptian townsmen in the rebellion. They must have encouraged if not headed the revolt; they had certainly deserved punishment, but the emperor even made an addition to the yearly supply of corn which was granted to them, together with the citizens of Rome, out of the Egyptian land-tax, and he allowed them to divide it among themselves. This was the bribe paid by the government to the Alexandrians for their help against the Egyptians; after the Alexandrians had joined the rebels, Diocletian, instead of punishing their disobedience raised the bribe for the future. With this privilege of a supply of food offered to every citizen who was poor enough to claim it, the citizens were the least industrious of all the inhabitants of the place. The poorer Alexandrians formed a riotous mob, proud of their superiority over the Egyptians and Jews, who were not entitled to carry arms. They were ready on every

Procopius, Arcan. cap. 26.

occasion to laugh at their rulers, and to meet in public assembly in the theatre to express their blame, without possessing any of those habits which form sober and virtuous citizens. As they were not dependent on trade, they had nothing to lose by a riot; they had the privileges of an upper class without their motives to guard the peace of the city. They increased all the evils which necessarily arise out of the overgrown size of a capital, without adding anything to the stock of industry and intelligence.

(43) In the twelfth year of the reign, that in which Alexandria rebelled and the siege was begun, the Egyptian coinage for the most part ceased. Henceforth, though money was often coined in Alexandria, as in every other great city of the empire, the inscriptions were usually in Latin, and the designs the same as those on the coins of Rome. In taking leave of this long and valuable series of coins with dates, which has been our guide in the chronology of these reigns, we must not forget to acknowledge how much we owe to the labours of the learned Zoega. In his *Numi Ægypti Imperatorii*, the mere descriptions, almost without a remark, speak the very words of history.

(44) The reign of Diocletian is chiefly remarkable for the new law which was then made against the Christians, and for the cruel severity with which it was put into force. The issuing of this fearful edict, which was to root out Christianity from the world, took place in the twentieth year of the reign, according to the Alexandrians, or in the nineteenth year after the emperor's first installation as consul, as years were reckoned in the other parts of the empire. The churches, which since the reign of Gallienus had been everywhere rising, were ordered to be destroyed and the Bibles to be burnt, while banishment, slavery, and death were the punishments threatened against those who obstinately clung to their religion. In no province of the empire was the persecution more severe than in Egypt; and many Christians fled to Syria, where the law, though the same, was more mildly carried into execution. But the Christians were too numerous to fly and too few to resist. The ecclesiastical writers present us with a sad tale of tortures and of death borne by those who nobly refused to renounce their faith,—a tale which is only made less sad by

Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. viii. A.D. 304.

the doubt how far the writers' feelings may have misled their judgment, and made them overstate the numbers.

(45) But we may safely rely upon the account which Eusebius gives us of what he himself saw in Egypt. Many were put to death on the same day, some beheaded, and some burnt. The executioners were tired, and the hearts of the pagan judges melted, by the unflinching firmness of the Christians. Many who were eminent for wealth, rank, and learning, chose to lay down their lives rather than throw a few grains of corn upon the altar, or comply with any ceremony that was required of them as a religious test. The judges begged them to think of their wives and children, and pointed out that they were the cause of their own death; but the Christians were usually firm, and were beheaded for the refusal to take the test. Among the most celebrated of the Egyptian martyrs were Peter bishop of Alexandria, with Faustus, Dius, and Ammonius, presbyters under him; the learned Phileas bishop of Thmuis, Hesychius the editor of the Septuagint, and the bishops Pachomius and Theodorus; though the pagans must have been still more surprised at Philoromus, the receiver-general of the taxes at Alexandria. This man, after the prefect of Egypt and the general of the troops, was perhaps the highest Roman officer in the province. He sat in public as a judge in Alexandria, surrounded by a guard of soldiers, daily deciding all causes relating to the taxes of Egypt. He was accused of no crime but that of being a Christian, which he was earnestly entreated to deny, and was at liberty indirectly to disprove by joining in some pagan sacrifice. The bishops of Alexandria and Thmuis may have been strengthened under their trials by their rank in the church, by having themselves urged others to do their duty in the same case, but the receiver-general of the taxes could have had nothing to encourage him but the strength of his faith and a noble scorn of falsehood; he was reproached or ridiculed by all around him, but he refused to deny his religion, and was beheaded as a common criminal.

(46) In many cases the Christians even willingly and unnecessarily brought death and torture upon themselves. When the pagan judge in Alexandria was reproaching some Christians who were brought before him with their folly, obstinacy, and treason, Ædisius, who

Eusebius, Martyr. Palest. lib. v.

stood by, came up and struck him as he sat upon the judgment-seat surrounded by his guards, and rudely reproached him with his cruelty. Conduct such as that would be overlooked in no court of justice, and we cannot be surprised that Edisius should have been punished severely for such an insult to the magistrate; he was put to death with torture, and his body was thrown into the sea.

(47) The ready ministers of this cruel persecution were Culcianus the prefect of the Thebaid, and Hierocles the prefect of Alexandria. The latter was peculiarly well chosen for the task; he added the zeal of the theologian to the ready obedience of the soldier. He had written against the Christians a work named *Philalethes* (the lover of truth), which we now know only in the answer by Eusebius of Cæsarea. In this he denounced the apostles as impostors, and the Christian miracles as trifling; and, comparing them with the pretended miracles of Apollonius of Tyana, he pronounced the latter more numerous, more important, and better authenticated by Maximus and Damis the philosophers than the former by the evangelists; and he ridiculed the Christians for calling Jesus a god, while the pagans did not raise Apollonius higher than a man beloved by the gods.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxviii.

(48) This persecution under Diocletian was one of the most severe that the Christians ever underwent from the Romans. It did not, however, wholly stop the religious services, nor break up the regular government of the church. In the catechetical school, Pierius, whom we have before spoken of as a man of learning, was succeeded by Theognostus and then by Serapion, whose name reminds us that the Egyptian party was gaining weight in the Alexandrian church. It can hardly have been for his superior learning, it may have been because his opinions were becoming more popular than those of the Greeks, that a professor with an Egyptian name was placed at the head of the catechetical school. Serapion was succeeded by Peter, who afterwards gained the bishopric of Alexandria and a martyr's crown. But these men were little known beyond their lecture-room. In the twentieth year of the reign, on the death of Peter the bishop of Alexandria, who lost his life as a martyr, the presbyters of the

Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell.

Eutychii Annales.

church met to choose a successor. Among their number was Arius, whose name afterwards became so famous in ecclesiastical history, and who had already, even before he was ordained a priest, offended many by the bold manner in which he stated his religious opinions. Not content with arguing reverently that Jesus was not a god but a created being, he had published a work, which he named "Thalia," containing songs written in ridicule of the so-called orthodox opinions. These he treated with so little respect that his volume of theology was thought to be as profane as the licentious writings of Sotades. Upon Arius, however, if we may believe a partial historian, the majority of votes fell in the choice of a patriarch of Alexandria, and had he not himself modestly given way to the more ambitious Alexander, he might perhaps have been saved from the treatment which he afterwards suffered from his rival.

Socrates, lib. i. 9.

Philostorgius, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

(49) When Diocletian and his colleague Valerius Maximian resigned the purple, Egypt with the rest of the East was given to GALERIUS, who had also been named Maximian on his Egyptian coins, while Constantius Chlorus ruled the West. Galerius granted some slight indulgence to the Christians, without wholly stopping the persecution. But all favour was again withdrawn from them by his successor MAXIMIN, who had indeed misgoverned Egypt for some years, under the title of Cæsar, before the rank of Augustus was granted to him. He encouraged private informers, he set townsman against townsman; and, as the wishes of the emperor are quickly understood by all under him, those who wished for his favour courted it by giving him an excuse for his cruelties. The cities sent up petitions to him, begging that the Christians might not be allowed to have churches within their walls. The history of these reigns indeed is little more than the history of the persecutions; and when the Alexandrian astronomers, dropping the era of Augustus, began to date from the first year of Diocletian, the Christian writers called it the era of Martyrs.

A.D. 305.

Lactantius, De mort. persecut.

A.D. 307.

Abul-Pharagius, Dyn. vii.

(50) It can be no matter of surprise to us that, in a perse-

cution which threatened all classes of society, there should have been many who, when they were accused of being Christians, wanted the courage to undergo the pains of martyrdom, and escaped the punishment by joining in a pagan sacrifice. When the storm was blown over, these men asked to be again received into the church, and their conduct gave rise to the very same quarrel that had divided the Christians in the reign of Decius. Meletius, a bishop of the Thebaid, was at the head of the party who would make no allowance for the weakness of their brethren, and who refused to grant to the repentant the forgiveness that they asked for. He had himself borne the same trials without bending, he had been sent as a criminal to work in the Egyptian mines, and had returned to Alexandria from his banishment, proud of his sufferings and furious against those who had escaped through cowardice. But the larger part of the bishops were of a more forgiving nature, they could not all boast of the same constancy, and the repentant Christians were readmitted into communion with the faithful, while the followers of Meletius were branded with the name of heretics.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxviii.

(51) In Alexandria, Meletius soon found another and, as it proved, a more memorable occasion for the display of his zeal. He has the unenviable honour of being the author of the great Arian quarrel, by accusing of heresy Arius, at that time a presbyter of the church of Baucala, near Alexandria, and by calling upon Alexander, the bishop, to inquire into his belief, and to condemn it if found unsound. Arius frankly and openly acknowledged his opinions; he thought Jesus a created being, and would speak of him in no higher terms than those used in the New Testament and Apostles' Creed, and defended his opinions by an appeal to the Scriptures. But he soon found that his defence was thought weak, and without waiting to be condemned he withdrew before the storm to Palestine, where he remained till summoned before the council of Nicæa in the coming reign.

(52) It was during these reigns of trouble, about which history is sadly silent, when Greek learning was sinking, and after the country had been for a year or two in the power of the Syrians, that the worship of Mithra was brought into Alexandria, where superstitious ceremonies and philosophical

subtleties were equally welcome. Mithra was the Persian god of the sun; and in the system of two gods, one good and the other wicked, he was the god of goodness. The chief symbol in his worship was the figure of a young hero in Phrygian cap and trousers, mounted on a sinking bull, and stabbing it in sacrifice to the god (see Fig. 119). In a deserted part of Alexandria, called the Mithrium, his rites were celebrated among ruins and rubbish; and his ignorant followers were as ignorantly and wickedly accused of there slaying their fellow-citizens on his altars. Such are too often the accusations which the strong bring against the weak.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. 2. Sozomen, lib. v. 7.

Fig. 119.

(53) It was about the same time that the eastern doctrine of Manicheism was said to have been brought into Egypt by Papus, and Thomas or Hermas, disciples of the Persian Manes, who has given his name to his opinions. Little, however, is known of any of these men; for though their doctrines were widely spread, yet they scarcely made a sect. Indeed the history of Manicheism is not so much the history of a sect as of an opinion. Manicheism was a Persian form of Gnosticism, and its most important doctrine was, that the world was created and governed by two principles, one

Alexander Lycopol.

Epiphanius, adversus Manich.

good and the other evil, but equally eternal and self-existent. One was mind and the other matter, one causing the happiness and the other the misery of mankind, one living in light and the other in darkness. This opinion had its rise in the difficulty of explaining the origin of sin, and of understanding how a merciful Creator could allow the existence of evil. The ignorant in all ages of Christianity seem to have held nearly the same opinion in one form or other, thinking that sin has arisen either from a wicked being or from the wickedness of the flesh itself. The Jews alone proclaimed that God created good and God created evil. But we know of few writers who have ever owned themselves Manicheans, though many have been reproached as such; their doctrine is now known only in the works written against it. Of all heresies among the Christians this is the one most denounced by the ecclesiastical writers, and most severely threatened by the laws when the lawmakers became Christian; and of all the accusations of the angry controversialists this was the most reproachful. We might almost think that the numerous fathers who have written against the Manicheans must have had an easy victory, when the enemy never appeared in the field, when their writings were scarcely answered, or their arguments denied; but perhaps a juster view would lead us to remark, how much the writers, as well as the readers, must have felt the difficulty of accounting for the origin of sin, since men have run into such wild opinions to explain it.

Isaiah, ch. xlv. 7.

(54) Another heresy, which for a time made even as much noise as the last, was that of Hieracas of Leontopolis. Even in Egypt, where for two thousand years it had been the custom to make the bodies of the dead into mummies, to embalm them against the day of resurrection, a custom which had been usually practised by the Christians, this native Egyptian ventured to teach that nothing but the soul would rise from the dead, and that we must look forward to only a spiritual resurrection. Hieracas was a man of some learning, and, much to the vexation of those who opposed his arguments, he could repeat nearly the whole Bible by heart. He wrote chiefly in Coptic, though he was not ignorant of Greek; and he died at a great age, leaving works in both languages.

Epiphanius, Hæres. lxvii.

(55) The Bishop Hesychius, the martyr in the late persecution, was one of the learned men of the time. He had published a new edition of the Septuagint Old Testament, and also of the New Testament. This edition was valued and chiefly used in Egypt, while that by Lucianus, who suffered in the same persecution, was read in Asia Minor from Constantinople to Antioch, and the older edition by Origen remained in use in Palestine. But such was the credit of Alexandria, as the chief seat of Christian learning and of the true faith, that distant churches sent there for copies of the Scriptures, foreign translations were mostly made from Alexandrian copies, and the greater number of Christians even now read the Bible according to the edition by Hesychius. We must, however, fear that these editors were by no means judicious in their labours. From the text itself we can learn that the early copiers of the Bible thought those manuscripts most valuable which were most full. Many a gloss and marginal note got written into the text, as in Psalm xiv., where several lines are added to make it agree with chapter iii. of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Their devotional feelings blinded their critical judgment; and they never ventured to put aside a modern addition as spurious. This mistaken view of their duty had of old guided the Hebrew copiers in Jerusalem; and though in Alexandria a juster criticism had been applied to the copies of Homer, it was not thought proper to use the same good sense when making copies of the Bible. So strong was the habit of grafting the additions into the text, that the Greek translation became more copious than the Hebrew original, as the Latin soon afterwards became more copious than the Greek.

Hieronymus, Præfat. in Paralipom.

(56) It was about this time, at least after Theodotion's translation of Daniel had received the sanction of the Alexandrian church, and when the teachers of Christianity found willing hearers in every city of Egypt, that the Bible was translated into the language of the country. We have now parts of three Coptic versions, the Memphitic, the Thebaic, and the Bashmuric; though the last two are hardly original versions, but rather adaptations of the Memphitic version to the dialect of the Thebaid and of the Bashmour province in the east of the Delta. They are translated closely, and

nearly word by word from the Greek; and, being meant for a people among whom that language had been spoken for centuries, about one word in five is Greek. The Thebaic and Bashmuric may have been translated from the edition by Hesychius; but the Coptic version seems older, and its value to the biblical critic is very great, as it helps us, with the quotations in Origen and Clemens, to distinguish the edition of the sacred text which was then used in Alexandria, and is shown in the celebrated Vatican manuscript, from the later editions used afterwards in Constantinople and Italy, when Christian literature flourished in those countries.

(57) The Emperor Maximin died at Tarsus after being defeated by LICINIUS, who like himself had been raised to the rank of Augustus by Galerius, and to whom the empire of Egypt and the East then fell, while Constantine, the son of Constantius, governed Italy and the West. Licinius held his empire for ten years against the growing strength of his colleague and rival; but the ambition of Constantine increased with his power, and Licinius was at last forced to gather together his army in Thrace, to defend himself from an attack. His forces consisted of one hundred and fifty thousand foot, fifteen thousand horse, and three hundred and fifty triremes, of which Egypt furnished eighty. He was defeated near Adrianople; and then, upon a promise that his life should be spared, he surrendered to Constantine at Nicomedia. But the promise was forgotten and Licinius hanged, and the Roman world was once more governed by a single emperor.

Zosimus, lib. ii. A.D. 313.

Horus-Ra as the vault of heaven.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE REIGNS OF CONSTANTINE, CONSTANTIUS, JULIAN, JOVIAN, AND VALENS. A.D. 323—378.

(1) The reign of Constantine is remarkable for the change which was then wrought in the religion and philosophy of the empire by the emperor's embracing the Christian faith. The Christians were at once released from every punishment and disability on account of their religion, which was then more than tolerated; they were put upon a nearly equal footing with the pagans, and every minister of the church was released from the burden of civil and military duties. Whether the emperor's conversion arose from education, from conviction, or from state policy, we have no means of knowing; but Christianity did not reach the throne before it was the religion of a most important class of his subjects. It had flourished under the frowns of power, and it was now to be corrupted by its smiles. The ignorant, the thoughtless, and the selfish of all classes, who take their religion from their rulers, began to declare themselves Christians; the rites of the pagans then passed into the church, and their subtleties into her creed; and the Egyptian Christians soon found themselves numerous enough to call the Greek Christians heretics, as the Greek Christians had already called the Jewish.

A.D. 323. Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. lib. x.

(2) The Greeks of Alexandria had formed rather a school of philosophy than a religious sect. Before Alexander's conquest the Greek settlers at Naucratis had thought it necessary to have their own temples and sacrifices; but since the building of Alexandria they had been smitten with the love of Eastern mysticism, and content to worship in the temples of Serapis and Mithra, and to receive instruction from the Egyptian priests. They had supported the religion of the conquered Egyptians without wholly believing it; and had shaken by their ridicule the respect for

the very ceremonies which they upheld by law. Polytheism among the Greeks had been further shaken by the Platonists; and Christianity spread in about equal proportions among the Greeks and the Egyptians. Before the conversion of Constantine the Egyptian church had already spread into every city of the province, and had a regular government not much differing from the episcopal government of the present day. Till the time of Heraclas and Dionysius, the bishops had been always chosen by the votes of the presbyters, as the archdeacons were by the deacons. Dionysius in his public epistles joins with himself his fellow-presbyters, as if he were only the first among equals; but after that time some irregularities had crept into the elections, and latterly the church had become more monarchical. There was a patriarch in Alexandria, with a bishop in every other large city, each assisted by a body of priests and deacons. They had been clad in faith, holiness, humility, and charity; but Constantine robed them in honour, wealth, and power; and to this many of them soon added pride, avarice, and ambition.

Hieronym. Epist. ci. ad Evangelum.

(3) This reign is no less remarkable for the religious quarrel which then divided the Christians which set church against church, and bishop against bishop, as soon as they lost that great bond of union, the fear of the pagans. Jesus of Nazareth was acknowledged by Constantine as a god or divine person; and, in the attempt then made by the Alexandrians to arrive at a more exact definition of his nature, while the emperor was willing to be guided by the bishops in his theological opinions, he was able to instruct them all in the more valuable lessons of mutual toleration and forbearance. The followers of all the early religions of the world of course held different opinions, but they distinguished themselves apart only by outward ceremonies and modes of worship, such as by sacrifices among the Greeks and Romans, and among the Jews and Egyptians by circumcision, and abstinence from certain meats. When Jesus of Nazareth introduced his spiritual religion of repentance and amendment of life, he taught that the test by which his disciples were to be known was their love to one another. After his death, however, the Christians gave more importance to opinions in religion, and towards the

end of the third century they proposed to distinguish their fellow-worshippers in a mode hitherto unknown to the world, namely, by the profession of belief in certain opinions; for as yet there was no difference in their belief of historic facts. This gave rise to numerous metaphysical discussions, particularly among the more speculative and mystical.

(4) Though Egypt had long been the slave of Greece and Rome, those two great states had always owned her as their mistress in pagan superstitions and religious novelties; and the schools of Alexandria, in which mathematics and chemistry were now only valued as helps to astrology and alchemy, and in which the study of philosophy had almost given place to verbal subtleties, gave birth to the quarrel about the nature of Jesus which has divided the Christian world for fifteen centuries. Theologians have found it difficult to determine what the immediate successors of the apostles and the early writers thought about the exact nature of the great founder of our religion. As it had never been brought to a logical dispute to be settled by argument or authority, the writers had not expressed their opinions in those exact terms which are so carefully used after a controversy has arisen. The Christians who had been born Jews believed that Jesus was a man, the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament; with the philosophical Greeks he was the divine wisdom, the Platonic *Logos;* and with the Egyptians he was one out of several *æons*, or powers proceeding from the Deity. Clemens Romanus, the friend of the Apostle Paul, only calls him our high-priest and master, phrases which Photius in the ninth century thought little short of blasphemy; while the philosopher Justin Martyr, and after him Clemens Alexandrinus, speak of Jesus as a god in a human form. But the pagan converts used the word "god" in a sense that the Jewish converts shrunk from. Dionysius bishop of Alexandria, when arguing against Sabellius, says that our Lord was the first-born of every created being; but, as Origen writes against the practice of addressing prayers to him, many Christians, finding it easier to worship Jesus than to imitate him, must have already considered him as the disposer or one of the disposers of all human events. But

Apud Synecellum.

De Oratione.

these inexact opinions did not satisfy that school which united the superstition of the Egyptians with the more refined speculations of the New Platonists. The teachers of Christianity, when explaining the great mission of Jesus, had made use of the figurative language of the Alexandrian Platonists, and the Egyptian party now declared that this language was to be understood literally; and, as soon as the quarrels with the pagans ceased, we find the Christians of Egypt and Alexandria divided into two parties, on the question whether the Son is of the *same substance* or only of a *similar substance* with the Father.

Eusebius, Vit. Constantini, lib. i.

(5) These disputes were brought to the ears of the emperor by Alexander bishop of Alexandria, and Arius the presbyter before mentioned. The bishop had been inquiring into the belief of the presbyter, and the latter had argued against his superior and against the doctrine of the *consubstantiality* of the Father and the Son. The emperor's letter to the angry theologians, in this first ecclesiastical quarrel that was ever brought before a Christian monarch, calls for our warmest praise. It is addressed to Alexander and Arius, and he therein tells them that they are raising useless questions, which it is not necessary to settle, and which, though a good exercise for the understanding, only breed ill will, and should be kept by each man in his own breast. He regrets the religious madness which has seized all Egypt; and lastly he orders the bishop not to question the priest as to his belief, and orders the priest, if questioned, not to return an answer. But this wise letter, so worthy of a Christian and a statesman, had no weight with the Alexandrian divines. The quarrel gained in importance from being noticed by the emperor; the civil government of the country was clogged; and Constantine, after having once interfered, was persuaded to call a council of bishops to settle the Christian faith for the future. Nicæa in Bithynia was chosen as the spot most convenient for eastern Christendom to meet in; and two hundred and fifty bishops, followed by crowds of priests, there met in council from Greece, Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, and Libya, with one or two from Western Europe.

Lib. ii.

Lib. iii.

A.D. 325.

(6) At this synod, Athanasius, a young deacon in the Alexandrian church, came for the first time into notice as the champion of Alexander his bishop against Arius, who was then placed upon his trial. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. All the authority, eloquence, and charity of the emperor were needed to quell the tumultuous passions of the assembly. It ended its stormy labours by voting what was called the Homoousian doctrine, that Jesus was of one substance with God. They put forth to the world the celebrated creed, named, from the city in which they met, the Nicene Creed, and they excommunicated Arius and his followers, who were then all banished by the emperor. The meeting had afterwards less difficulty in coming to an agreement about the true time of Easter, which they ordered should be kept, not as heretofore like the Jewish Passover, on the day of the full moon, but on the first Sunday after. They then excommunicated the Jews; and all except the Egyptians returned home with a wish that the quarrel should be forgotten and forgiven. Thus in an evil hour, though with great pomp and solemnity, was the ill-starred alliance struck between the old subtleties and the new religion. This first attempt among the Christians at settling the true faith by putting fetters on the mind, by drawing up a creed and punishing those that disbelieved it, was but the beginning of theological difficulties; and had the Christians grown wise by experience, they would never have allowed the attempt to be repeated. The difficulties in Egypt arose as much from the difference of blood and language of the races that inhabited the country as from their religious belief; and Constantine must soon have seen that if as a theologian he had decided right, yet as a statesman he had been helping the Egyptians against the friends of his own Greek government in Alexandria. Eusebius, Vit. Const. lib. iii.

(7) It was at this time that it became the custom for the bishop of Alexandria to write a letter once a year to the bishops under his control to tell them on what Sunday they should celebrate the feast of Easter. These were called his Paschal letters. It was thought of the first importance that all Christians should keep the same day; and as in the late struggle at Nicæa the Egyptian party had been so far victorious, it at the same time became the custom for the

rest of the world quietly to accept the day as fixed by the bishop of Alexandria. Not that the bishop of Alexandria was allowed to have any authority beyond Egypt and Cyrene; but since Rome had for some time ceased to be the capital of the empire, and Constantinople was not yet built, and the claims of Jerusalem were every day growing weaker, Alexandria, the queen of the Greek cities, was for the time allowed to be the religious centre of Christendom. The science of the Alexandrian astronomers perhaps contributed to give weight to the Alexandrian bishop.

(8) After a reasonable delay, Arius addressed to the emperor a letter either of explanation or apology, asserting his full belief in Christianity, explaining his faith by using the words of the Apostles' Creed, and begging to be readmitted into the church. The emperor, either from a readiness to forgive, or from a change of policy, or from an ignorance of the theological controversy, was satisfied with the apology, and thereupon wrote a mild conciliatory letter to Athanasius, who had in the meantime been made bishop of Alexandria, expressing his wish that forgiveness should at all times be offered to the repentant, and ordering him to readmit Arius to his rank in the church. But the young Athanasius, who had gained his favour with the Egyptian clergy, and had been raised to his high seat, by his zeal shown against Arius, refused to obey the commands of the emperor, alleging that it was unlawful to readmit into the church anybody who had once been excommunicated. Constantine could hardly be expected to listen to this excuse, or to overlook this direct refusal to obey his orders. The rebellious Athanasius was ordered into the emperor's presence at Constantinople, and soon afterwards called before a council of bishops at Tyre, where he was deposed from his see and banished for disobedience. At the same council, in the thirtieth year of this reign, Arius was readmitted into communion with the church, and after a few months he was allowed to return to Alexandria, to the indignation of the popular party in that city, while Athanasius remained in banishment during the rest of the reign.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

A.D. 335.

(9) Among other evils which arose from this practice of judging and condemning the opinions of our neighbours one was, that it gave power in the church to men who would

otherwise have been least entitled to weight and influence. Humble, meek, and affectionate Christians are least forward in making creeds for their brethren and blaming those who differ from them. On the other hand, the violent, proud, and enthusiastic, who either cannot or will not weigh the arguments of their opponents, are always most positive and most unsparing in their reproaches. These men usually take the lead in a system of persecution. Athanasius rose to his high rank over the heads of the elder presbyters by his fitness for the harsher duties then required of an archbishop. Theological opinions became the watchwords of two contending parties; religion lost much of its empire over the heart; and the mild spirit of Christianity gave way to angry quarrels and cruel persecutions. The church then became the stronghold of the passion for power and pomp, indeed of the lusts and vices to which Christianity is most hostile. Such has too often been its history.

(10) After the council of Nicæa we hear little more of the despised body of Nazarenes, or Jewish Christians. That name had once embraced the whole body of believers; but on the spread of Christianity among the Gentiles it was confined to those who held to the laws of Moses, and believed that Jesus was no more than the greatest of the prophets. The Jews felt little encouragement to embrace Christianity, and form part of a sect that was now denounced by all other Christians as heretical; and after the time of Constantine the name and opinions of the Nazarenes are only known among the Jews of Abyssinia and the opposite coast of Arabia.

Epiphanius, Hæres. xx.

(11) Another remarkable event of this reign was the foundation of the new city of Constantinople, to which the emperor removed the seat of his government. Rome lost much by the building of the new capital, although the emperors had for some time past ceased to live in Italy; but Alexandria soon lost more, it lost the rank which it had long held as the centre of Greek learning and Greek thought, and it felt a blow from which Rome was saved by the difference of language. The patriarch of Alexandria could not long remain the head of Greek Christendom, that rank would soon be granted to the bishop of the imperial city; many of the philosophers who hung

Chronicon Alexandr. A.D. 328.

round the palace at Constantinople would otherwise have studied and taught in the Museum; and the Greeks, by whose superiority Egypt had so long been kept in subjection, gradually became the weaker party. In the opinion of the historian, as in the map of the geographer, Alexandria had formerly been a Greek state on the borders of Egypt; but since the rebellion in the reign of Diocletian it was becoming more and more an Egyptian city; and those who in religion and politics thought and felt as Egyptians soon formed the larger half of the Alexandrians. Few problems are more difficult than to find the reasons why civilisation and literature forsake a once favoured shore, why empires fall and arts decay on spots where they once flourished; but we may sometimes find out a part of the reasons, and in this case it would seem that the gradual fall of Alexandria was quickened by the building of Constantinople. The climate of Egypt was hardly fitted for the Greek race. Their numbers never could have been kept up by births alone, and they now began to lessen as the attraction to new-comers ceased. The pure Greek names henceforth become less common; and among the monks and writers we now meet with Ammonius, Anuph, Horus, Nilus, Oresiesis, Serapion, Tryphiodorus, and so forth, named after the old gods of the country.

Macrobius, Saturn. i.

(12) Constantine removed an obelisk from Egypt for the ornament of his new city, and he brought down another from Heliopolis to Alexandria; but he died before the second left the country, and it was afterwards taken by his son to Rome. These obelisks were as usual covered with hieroglyphics, and we have a translation said to be made from the latter by Hermapion, an Egyptian priest; but though from the style and matter we know that it is a real translation from an obelisk, we have not found the inscription from which it was taken. In order to take away its pagan character from the religious ceremony with which the yearly rise of the Nile was celebrated in Alexandria, Constantine removed the sacred cubit from the temple of Serapis to one of the Christian churches; and notwithstanding the gloomy forebodings of the people, the Nile rose as usual, and the clergy afterwards celebrated the time of its overflow as a Christian festival,

Chronicon Alexandr. Ammianus, lib. xvii.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. i.

according to their usual plan of grafting one religion on the other. The Alexandrian book-writers at this time supplied Constantinople with fifty copies of the Church Lessons, or those parts of the Bible which were most suitable to be read to the assembled congregations. These were on parchment, and were made under the eyes of Eusebius bishop of Cæsarea, by order of the emperor for his new churches. Thus Egypt still kept its old character of being the fountain of religious truth to the neighbouring nations.

Vita Constantini, iv. 36.

(13) The pagan philosophers under Constantine had but few pupils and met with but little encouragement. Alypius of Alexandria and his friend Iamblichus, however, still taught the philosophy of Ammonius and Plotinus, though the philosophers were so much in the habit of moving about to Alexandria, Pergamus, or Rome, that it is not always easy to know in what school they taught. The only writings by Alypius now remaining are his Introduction to Music in which he explains the notation of the fifteen modes or tones in their respective kinds of Diatonic, Chromatic, and Enharmonic. His signs are said to be Pythagorean. They are in pairs, of which one is thought to represent the note struck on the lyre, and the other the tone of the voice to be sung thereto. They thus imply accord or harmony. The same signs are found in some manuscripts written over the syllables of ancient poems; and thereby scholars, learned at once in the Greek language, in the art of deciphering signs, and in the science of music, now chant the odes of Pindar in strains not unlike our cathedral psalmody. Iamblichus, who had studied under Anatolius in the school of Christian Peripatetics, has left many works. In his Treatise on Mysteries, in which he quotes the Hermetic books of Bytis, an Egyptian priest, the outward visible symbols become emblems of divine truth; the Egyptian religion becomes a branch of Platonism; and their gods so many agents or intermediate beings, only worshipped as servants of the one Creator.

Eunapius, Vit. Soph.

(14) Achilles Tatius was the author of an astronomical work on the sphere, meant as a commentary on the Phenomena of Aratus, and of a well-written but licentious romance, named "The loves of Clitophon and Leucippe." He became a Christian, and his learning raised

Suidas.

him to the rank of a bishop. His mathematics and his licentious writings were the fruits of an Alexandrian education; but what Christian flock had the doubtful advantage of his care as a bishop is unknown.

(15) Sopator succeeded Iamblichus as professor of Platonism in Alexandria, with the proud title of successor to Plato. For some time he enjoyed the friendship of Constantine; but, when religion made a quarrel between the friends, the philosopher was put to death by the emperor. The pagan account of the quarrel was that, when Constantine had killed his son, he applied to Sopator to be purified from his guilt; and when the Platonist answered that he knew of no ceremony that could absolve a man from such a crime, the emperor applied to the Christians for baptism. This story may not be true, and the ecclesiastical historian remarks that Constantine had professed Christianity several years before the murder of his son; but then, as after his conversion he had got Sopator to consecrate his new city with a variety of pagan ceremonies, he may in the same way have asked him to absolve him from the guilt of murder.

Suidas.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. 5.

Joh. Lydus.

(16) On the death of Constantine, his three sons, without entirely dismembering the empire, divided the provinces of the Roman world into three shares. Constantine II., the eldest son, who succeeded to the throne of his father in Constantinople, and Constans, the youngest, who dwelt in Rome, divided Europe between them; while CONSTANTIUS, the second son, held Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Egypt, of which possessions Antioch on the Orontes was at that time the capital. Thus Alexandria was doomed to a further fall. When governed by Rome it had still been the first of Greek cities; afterwards, when the seat of the empire was fixed at Constantinople, it became the second; but on this division of the Roman world, when the seat of government came still nearer to Egypt, and Antioch rose as the capital of the East, Alexandria fell to be the third among Greek cities. Egypt quietly received its political orders from Antioch. But in religious matters Egypt, or rather Alexandria, still claimed to be the seat of true knowledge;

A.D. 337.

Chronicon Alexandr. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. Abul-Pharagius.

and its claim was usually supported by Italy against Constantinople and Antioch. But its opinions in some cases followed those of the Syrian capital; and it is curious to remark that the Alexandrian writers when dating by the era of the creation, were now willing to consider the world ten years less old than they used, because it was so thought at Antioch. But it was not so with their religious opinions, and as long as Antioch and its emperor undertook to govern the Egyptian church there was little peace in the province.

(17) The three emperors did not take the same side in the quarrel which under the name of religion was then unsettling the obedience of the Egyptians, and even in some degree troubling the rest of the empire. Constantius held the Arian opinions of Syria; but Constantine II. and Constans openly gave their countenance to the party of the rebellious Athanasius, who under their favour ventured to return to Alexandria, where, after an absence of two years and four months, he was received in the warmest manner by his admiring flock. But on the death of Constantine II., who was shortly afterwards killed in battle by his brother Constans, Constantius felt himself more master of his own kingdom; he deposed Athanasius, and summoned a council of bishops at Antioch to elect a new patriarch of Alexandria. Christian bishops, though they had latterly owed their ordination to the authority of their equals, had always received their bishopries by the choice of their presbyters or of their flocks; and though they were glad to receive the support of the emperor, they were not willing to acknowledge him as their head. Hence, when the council at Antioch first elected Eusebius of Emisa into the bishopric of Alexandria, he chose to refuse the honour which they had only a doubtful right to bestow, rather than to venture into the city in the face of his popular rival. The council then elected Gregory, whose greater courage and ambition led him to accept the office.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Theodoretus, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. Abul-Pharagius.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

(18) The council of Antioch then made some changes in the creed; they left out the words "God of God, of one substance with the Father," as being the chief cause of the quarrel, and as supporting too much the Egyptian doctrine of Sabellianism; and they styled Jesus, in the words of the

New Testament, "the first begotten of every creature, and the express image of his Father's substance." A few years later, a second council met in the same place, and drew up a creed more near to what we now call the Athanasian; but it was firmly rejected by the Egyptian and Roman churches, because it did not contain the Homoousian or consubstantial doctrine. Thus in these times of passionate strife and in the midst of party quarrels, the councils fixed their opinion by means of creeds, and left to their successors the task of defending them. Creeds written in the dark have now to be defended in the light; and those who profess them have the painful task of employing learning to justify ignorance.

(19) Gregory was no sooner elected to the bishopric than he issued his commands as bishop, though, if he had the courage, he had not at the time the power to enter Alexandria. But Syrianus the general of the Egyptian troops was soon afterwards ordered by the emperor to place him on his episcopal throne; and he led him into the city, surrounded by the spears of five thousand soldiers, and followed by the small body of Alexandrians that after this invasion of their acknowledged rights still called themselves Arians. Gregory entered Alexandria in the evening, meaning to take his seat in the church on the next day; but the people in their zeal did not wait quietly for the dreaded morning, they ran at once to the church, and passed the night there with Athanasius in the greatest anxiety. In the morning, when Gregory arrived at the church, accompanied with the troops, he found the doors barricaded and the building full of men and women denouncing the sacrilege, and threatening resistance. But the general gave orders that the church should be stormed, and the new bishop carried in by force of arms; and Athanasius, seeing that all resistance was useless, ordered the deacons to give out a psalm, and they all marched out at the opposite door singing. After these acts of violence on the part of the troops, and of zealous resistance on the part of the people, the whole city was thrown into an uproar, and the prefect was hardly strong enough to carry on the government; the regular supply of corn for the poor citizens of Alexandria, and for Constantinople, was stopped; and the blame of the whole thrown upon Athanasius. He was a second time obliged to leave Egypt, and he fled to Rome,

where he was warmly received by the Emperor Constans and the Roman bishop. But the zeal of the Athanasian party would not allow Gregory to keep possession of the church which he had gained only by force; they soon afterwards set fire to it and burned it to the ground, choosing that there should be no church at all rather than that it should be in the hands of the Arians; and the Arian clergy and bishops, though supported by the favour of the emperor and the troops of the prefect, were everywhere throughout Egypt driven from their churches and monasteries. Gregory lived about seven years after his appointment to the bishopric.

(20) During this quarrel it seems to have been felt by both parties that the choice of the people, or at least of the clergy, was necessary to make a bishop, and that Gregory had very little claim to that rank in Alexandria. Julius the bishop of Rome warmly espoused the cause of Athanasius, and he wrote a letter to the Alexandrian church, praising their zeal for their bishop, and ordering them to readmit him to his former rank, from which he had been deposed by the council of Antioch, but to which he had been restored by the Western bishops. Athanasius was also warmly supported by Constans the emperor of the West, who at the same time wrote to his brother Constantius, begging him to replace the Alexandrian bishop, and threatening that if he would not he should be made to do so by force of arms.

(21) Constantius, after taking the advice of his own bishops, thought it wisest to yield to the wishes or rather the commands of his brother Constans, and he wrote to Athanasius, calling him into his presence in Constantinople. But the rebellious bishop was not willing to trust himself within the reach of his offended sovereign; and it was not till after a second and a third letter, pressing him to come and promising him his safety, that he ventured within the limits of the Eastern empire. Strong in his high character for learning, firmness, and political skill, carrying with him the allegiance of the Egyptian nation, which was yielded to him much rather than to the emperor, and backed by the threats of Constans, Athanasius was at least a match for Constantius. At Constantinople the emperor and his subject the Alexandrian bishop made a formal treaty, by which it was agreed that, if Constantius would allow the Homoousian clergy throughout

his dominions to return to their churches, Athanasius would in the same way throughout Egypt restore the Arian clergy; and upon this agreement Athanasius himself returned to Alexandria.

(22) Among the followers of Athanasius was that important mixed race with whom the Egyptian civilization chiefly rested, a race that may be called Coptic, but half Greek and half Egyptian in their language and religion as in their forefathers. But in feelings they were wholly opposed to the Greeks of Alexandria. Never since the last Nectanebo was conquered by the Persians, eight hundred years earlier, did the Egyptians seem so near to throwing off the foreign yoke and rising again as an independent nation. But the Greeks, who had taught them so much, had not taught them the arts of war; and the nation remained enslaved to those who could wield the sword. The return of Athanasius, however, was only the signal for a fresh uproar, and the Arians complained that Egypt was kept in a constant turmoil by his zealous activity. Nor were the Arians his only enemies. He had offended many others of his clergy by his overbearing manners, and more particularly by his following in the steps of Alexander the late bishop, in claiming new and higher powers for the office of patriarch than had ever been yielded to the bishops of Alexandria before their spiritual rank had been changed into civil rank by the emperor's adoption of their religion. Meletius headed a strong party of bishops, priests, and deacons, in opposing the new claims of the archiepiscopal see of Alexandria. His followers differed in no point of doctrine from the Athanasian party, but as they sided with the Arians they were usually called heretics.

Theodoret. Hæretic. iv.

(23) By this time the statesmen and magistrates had gained a clear view of the change which had come over the political state of the empire, first by the spread of Christianity, and secondly by the emperor's embracing it. By supporting Christianity the emperors gave rank in the state to an organised and well-trained body, which immediately found itself in possession of all that civil power which in an ignorant age is given to the clergy. A bishopric, which a few years before was a post of danger, was now a place of great profit, and secured to its possessor every worldly

advantage of wealth, honour, and power. An archbishop in the capital, obeyed by a bishop in every city, with numerous priests and deacons under them, was usually of more weight than the prefect. While Athanasius was at the height of his popularity in Egypt, and was supported by the emperor of the West, the Emperor Constantius was very far from being his master. But on the death of Constans, when Constantius became sovereign of the whole empire, he once more tried to make Alexandria and the Egyptian church obedient to his wishes. He was, however, still doubtful how far it was prudent to measure his strength against that of the bishop, and he chose rather to begin privately with threats before using his power openly. He first wrote word to Athanasius, as if in answer to a request from the bishop, that he was at liberty, if he wished, to visit Italy; but he sent the letter by the hands of the notary Diogenes, who added, by word of mouth, that the permission was meant for a command, and that it was the emperor's pleasure that he should immediately quit his bishopric and the province. But this underhand conduct of the emperor only showed his own weakness. Athanasius steadily refused to obey any unwritten orders, and held his bishopric for upwards of two years longer, before Constantius felt strong enough to enforce his wishes. Towards the end of that time, Syrianus, the general of the Egyptian army, to whom this delicate task was entrusted, gathered together from other parts of the province a body of five thousand chosen men, and with these he marched quietly into Alexandria, to overawe, if possible, the rebellious bishop. He gave out no reasons for his conduct; but the Arians, who were in the secret, openly boasted that it would soon be their turn to possess the churches. Syrianus then sent for Athanasius, and in the presence of Maximus the prefect again delivered to him the command of Constantius, that he should quit Egypt and retire into banishment, and he threatened to carry this command into execution by the help of the troops if he met with any resistance. Athanasius, without refusing to obey, begged to be shown the emperor's orders in writing; but this reasonable request was refused. He then entreated them even to give him, in their own handwriting, an order for his banishment; but

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Athanasius, Apolog. ad Constant.

this was also refused, and the citizens, who were made acquainted with the emperor's wishes and the bishop's firmness, waited in dreadful anxiety to see whether the prefect and the general would venture to enforce their orders. The presbytery of the church and the corporation of the city went up to Syrianus in solemn procession to beg him either to show a written authority for the banishment of their bishop, or to write to Constantinople to learn the emperor's pleasure. To this request Syrianus at last yielded, and gave his word to the friends of Athanasius that he would take no further steps till the return of the messengers which he then sent to Constantinople.

(24) But Syrianus had before received his orders, which were, if possible, to frighten Athanasius into obedience, and, if that could not be done, then to employ force, but not to expose the emperor's written commands to the danger of being successfully resisted. He therefore only waited for an opportunity of carrying them into effect; and at midnight on the fourteenth of Mechir, our ninth of February, twenty-three days after the promise had been given, Syrianus, at the head of his troops, armed for the assault, surrounded the church where Athanasius and a crowded assembly were at prayers. The doors were forcibly and suddenly broken open, the armed soldiers rushed forward to seize the bishop, and numbers of his faithful friends were slain in their efforts to save him. Athanasius, however, escaped in the tumult; but though the general was unsuccessful, the bodies of the slain, and the arms of the soldiers found scattered through the church in the morning, were full proofs of his unholy attempt. The friends of the bishop drew up and signed a public declaration describing the outrage, and Syrianus sent to Constantinople a counter-protest declaring that there had been no serious disturbance in the city.

A.D. 356.

Athanasius, Hist. Arian.

(25) Athanasius, with nearly the whole of the nation for his friends, easily escaped the vengeance of the emperor; and, withdrawing for a third time from public life, he passed the remainder of this reign in concealment. He did not, however, neglect the interests of his flock. He encouraged them with his letters, and even privately visited his friends in Alexandria. As the greater part of the population was eager

to befriend him, he was there able to hide himself for six years. Disregarding the scandal that might arise from it, he lived in the house of a young woman, who concealed him in her chamber, and waited on him with untiring zeal. She was then in the flower of her youth, only twenty years of age; and fifty years afterwards, in the reign of Theodosius II., when the name of the archbishop ranked with those of the apostles, this woman used to boast among the monks of Alexandria, that in her youth she had for six years concealed the great Athanasius. Palladius, Hist. Lausiac.

(26) But though the general was not wholly successful, though he was not able even to recover from the church the broken weapons of his soldiers, the proofs of his outrage, though the bishop escaped his vigilance, yet the Athanasian party was for the time crushed. Sebastianus, the new prefect, was sent into Egypt with orders to seize Athanasius dead or alive, wherever he should be found within the province; and under his protection the Arian party in Alexandria again ventured to meet in public, and proceeded to choose a bishop. They elected to this high post the celebrated George of Cappadocia, a man who, while he equalled his more popular rival in learning and in ambition, fell far behind him in coolness of judgment, and in that political skill which is as much wanted in the guidance of a religious party as in the government of an empire. Athanasius, Hist. Arian. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

(27) George was born at Epiphania in Cilicia, and was the son of a clothier, but his ambition led him into the church, as being at that time the fairest field for the display of talent; and he rose from one station to another till he reached the high post of bishop of Alexandria. The fickle, irritable Alexandrians needed no such firebrand to light up the flames of discontent. George took no pains to conceal the fact that he held his bishopric by the favour of the emperor and the power of the army against the wishes of his flock. To support his authority, he opened his doors to informers of the worst description; anybody who stood in the way of his grasp at power was accused of being an enemy to the emperor; and, forgetting his profession, says the pagan historian, which should have made him gentle and forgiving, he was himself the chief cause of sedition in his Ammianus, lib. xxii.

bishopric. He proposed to the emperor to lay a house-tax on Alexandria, thereby to repay the expense incurred by Alexander the Great in building the city; and he made the imperial government more unpopular than it had ever been since Augustus landed in Egypt. The crimes which he is said to have rushed into during his struggles with the Athanasian party almost pass belief; but we learn them chiefly from the pen of his enemy. He used the army as the means of terrifying the Homœousians into an acknowledgment of the Arian opinions. He banished fifteen bishops to the Great Oasis, besides others of lower rank. He beat, tortured, and put to death; the persecution was more cruel than any suffered from the pagans, except perhaps that in the reign of Diocletian; and thirty Egyptian bishops are said to have lost their lives while George was patriarch of Alexandria.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii.

(28) At this time the countries at the southern end of the Red Sea were becoming a little more known to Alexandria. Meropius, travelling in the reign of Constantine for curiosity and the sake of knowledge, had visited Auxum, the capital of the Hexumitæ, in Abyssinia. His companion Frumentius undertook to convert the people to Christianity and persuade them to trade with Egypt; and, as he found them willing to listen to his arguments, he came home to Alexandria to tell of his success and ask for support. Athanasius readily entered into a plan for spreading the blessings of Christianity and the power of the Alexandrian church. To increase the missionary's weight he consecrated him a bishop, and sent him back to Auxum to continue his good work. His progress, however, was somewhat checked by sectarian jealousy; for, when Athanasius was deposed by Constantius, Frumentius was recalled to receive again his orders and his opinions from George the new patriarch. Constantius also sent an embassy to the Homeritæ, on the opposite coast of Arabia, under Theophilus, a monk and deacon in the church. The Homeritæ were of Jewish blood, though of Gentile faith, and were readily converted, if not to Christianity at least to friendship with the emperor. After consecrating their churches, Theophilus crossed over to the African coast,

Socrates, lib. i. 19.

Athanasius, Apolog. i. 21.

Philostorgius, lib. iii. 4.

to the Hexumitæ, to carry on the work which Frumentius had begun. There he was equally successful in the object of his embassy. Both in trade and in religion, the Hexumitæ, who were also of Jewish blood, were eager to be connected with the Europeans, from whom they were cut off by Arabs of a wilder race. He found also a little to the south of Auxum a settlement of Syrians, who were said to have been placed there by Alexander the Great. These tribes spoke the language called Ethiopic, a dialect of Arabic which was not used in the country which we have hitherto called Ethiopia. The Ethiopic version of the Bible was about this time made for their use. It was translated out of the Greek from the Alexandrian copies, as the Greek version was held in such value that it was not thought necessary to look to the Hebrew original of the Old Testament. But these well-meant efforts did little at the time towards making the Hexumitæ Christians. Distance and the Blemmyes checked their intercourse with Alexandria. It was not till two hundred years later that they could be said in the slightest sense to be converted to Christianity.

(29) As we advance in the history of Christianity in Egypt we leave the ages of enlightened learning and enter upon those of ignorance and bigotry. We have more than once had to remark the readiness with which pagan Europe copied the religious worship of Egypt; and not a few of the superstitions which have at times disfigured Christianity seem to have sprung from that fruitful soil. The origin of monastic life has sometimes been claimed for the Essenes on the shores of the Dead Sea, but it had flourished in the Egyptian temples for centuries before the Christian era, and it was in Egypt that it was framed into a system, and became the model for the Christian world. It took its rise in the serious and gloomy views of religion which always formed part of the Egyptian polytheism, and which the Greeks remarked as very unlike their own gay and tasteful modes of worship, and which were readily engrafted by the Egyptian converts into their own Christian belief. Weak-minded but well-meaning men, little satisfied with a life spent under their own guidance, are often glad to put themselves into another's keeping; and they find obedience to a monastic rule less troublesome than being left to their own unsteady conscience. In the reigns of Constantine and

Pliny, lib. v. 15.

his sons, hundreds of Christians, both men and women, quitting the pleasures and trials of the busy world, withdrew one by one into the Egyptian desert, where the sands are as boundless as the ocean, where the sunshine is less cheerful than darkness, to spend their lonely days and watchful nights in religious meditation and in prayer. They were led by a gloomy view of their duty towards God, and by a want of fellow-feeling for their neighbour; and they seemed to think that pain and misery in this world would save them from punishment hereafter. So difficult indeed do we all feel the practice of self-denial in the active paths of life, that these hermits, by habits which often degenerated into ignorance and idleness, earned the admiration of their fellow-Christians more easily than they could have done by active benevolence or learned industry among the crowds of a city. The lives of many of these Fathers of the Desert were written by the Christians who lived at the same time; but a full account of the miracles which were said to have been worked in their favour, or by their means, would now only call forth a smile of pity, or perhaps even of ridicule. The painful want and torture, however, which they suffered in acknowledgment of their sinfulness were allowed by their admiring followers to be a proof of their real holiness and of the truth of their miracles.

Syntagma Doctrinæ.

(30) The monks had borrowed many of their customs from the old Egyptian priests, such as shaving the head; and Athanasius in his charge to them orders them not to adopt the tonsure on the head, nor to shave the beard. He forbids their employing magic or incantations to assist their prayers. He endeavours to stop their emulation in fasting, and orders those whose strength of body enabled them to fast longest not to boast of it. But he orders them not even to speak to a woman, and wishes them not to bathe, as being an immodest act. The early Christians, as being a sect of Jews, had followed many Jewish customs, such as observing the sabbath as well as the Lord's day; but latterly the line between the two religions had been growing wider, and Athanasius orders the monks not to keep holy the Jewish sabbath. After a few years their religious duties were clearly laid down for them in several well-drawn codes, when it was seen that outward obedience to a religious rule

does not always lead to inward piety, and indeed has more often been allowed to stand in its place.

(31) One of the earliest of these ascetics was Ammon, who on the morning of his marriage is said to have persuaded his young wife of the superior holiness of a single life, and to have agreed with her that they should devote themselves apart to the honour of God in the desert. But in thus avoiding the pleasures, the duties, and the temptations of the world, Ammon lost many of the virtues and even the decencies of society; he never washed himself, or changed his garments, because he thought it wrong for a religious man even to see himself undressed; and when he had occasion to cross a canal, his biographer tells us that attendant angels carried him over the water in their arms, lest, while keeping his vows, he should be troubled by wet clothes. But the self-denial and severities of Ammon were thrown into the shade by the far greater amount of want and pain and torture which were borne by his follower Anthony. Had the life and temptations of St. Anthony been written in the monasteries of Spain or Italy, in the eleventh century, we should less wonder at the number of miracles that we are called upon to believe; but since they were published as if by Athanasius, in whose diocese the monk dwelt, and who was visited by him at Alexandria, we are not a little startled at the boldness of the fable; and we are driven to the painful remark, that by as much as the ecclesiastical writers surpass the pagan historians in earnestness and zeal, they fall below them in truth and impartiality. They wrote with as little judgment as if they thought that common sense would never again visit the earth. That the Life of St. Anthony was not written by Athanasius is clear from the writer's ignorance of the streets of Alexandria. Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

(32) St. Anthony dwelt in the neighbourhood of Heracleopolis, and was visited in his solitude by the soul of Ammon, and guided in his religious duties by his advice. While living alone in the tombs, he was attacked by the devil in various forms. At one time, the walls of his cell were broken down, and in rushed a troop of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, serpents, asps, scorpions, and wolves, that were, however, easily put to flight by the prayers of the saint. At Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. Athanasius, Vit. Antonii.

another time, the devil in the form of a stranger knocked at the monastery, and when St. Anthony opened the door, and asked who was there, the wicked one unhesitatingly answered Satan, but fled on hearing the name of Christ. St. Anthony healed the sick by his prayers, drove out demons by the sign of the cross, and knew what was happening at a distance, as well as what was going to happen at a future time. After twenty years thus spent in solitary meditation and painful self-denial, he came forth to the world as a heaven-taught teacher, to help in denouncing the Arian opinions. He had no respect for learning; letters, he said, were made by the understanding, and as he possessed an understanding he could have no want of letters. When his fame was at its height, and he was honoured with a letter from the emperor, he was unable to write an answer to it in Greek. The only studies that he valued were those of the Bible and of astrology; and he chose to have his fortune told rather by calculations founded on the hour of his becoming a monk than on the hour of his birth. He wrote, however, a few letters in the Coptic language to the Egyptian monasteries, which gained him the title of one of the ecclesiastical writers, and which were afterwards translated into Greek.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

(33) The ecclesiastical history of these times is crowded with miracles; and the question naturally arises whether we owe these stories to the dishonesty or to the weakness of the historians. But before attributing them to either, we moderns should call to mind that then the course of nature had been less exactly observed, and its laws were less understood, and therefore what was regular and what was irregular was less known than now. Violations of the expected order of events seemed common; and as nobody could think they came to pass without a cause, the belief in miraculous powers was universal. Any circumstance is of course believed on weaker evidence by one who thus fancies it probable than by one who thinks it improbable; and hence a man of strict truth and good understanding might then relate, and believe, marvels which are now thought the creation of either weak enthusiasts or impostors. When the hearer inwardly felt that the religious teaching was divine, he perhaps first fancied and then told others that the teacher had proved it so by his miracles.

(34) Among the Christian writers of the time was Serapion, bishop of Thmuis, a friend of Anthony, who wrote a valuable work against the opinions of the Manichæans. But the most learned Christian of this reign was the blind Didymus, who was at the head of the catechetical school. He was deeply skilled in mathematics as well as in pagan philosophy; and many came from afar to Alexandria, to see him and hear his lectures. He was warmly attached to Athanasius and the Nicene Creed, much indeed to the grief of the Arians, who wished to boast that every man of learning was on their side in the controversy. He wrote a commentary on the Bible, and a treatise against the Manichæans, which is still extant.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. 25.

(35) In the religious controversies, whether pagan or Christian, Rome had often looked to Egypt for its opinions; Constans, when wanting copies of the Greek Scriptures for Rome, had lately sent to Alexandria, and had received the approved text from Athanasius. This we must suppose was the edition lately put forth by Hesychius. The two countries held nearly the same opinions and had the same dislike of the Greeks; so when Jerome visited Egypt he found the church holding, he said, the true Roman faith as taught by the apostles. He studied for some time under Didymus, having the same religious opinions with the Egyptian, and the same dislike to Arianism. But no dread of heresy stopped Jerome in his search for knowledge and for books. He obtained copies of the whole of Origen's works, and read them with the greatest admiration. It is true that he finds fault with many of his opinions; but no admirer of Origen could speak in higher terms of praise of his virtues and his learning, of the qualities of his head and of his heart, than Jerome uses, while he timidly pretends to think that he has done wrong in reading his works.

Athanasius, Apologia.

Epist. 58. Epist. 61.

(36) Among the pagans the rhetorician Aphthonius was the professor who enjoyed most celebrity for his wisdom and eloquence; and many came from a distance to hear him. His opinions leaned towards those of the Manichæans; and Ætius, an Arian, who had come to profit by his teaching, undertook to confute him in public. Within seven days after the discussion Aph-

Philostorgius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. 15.

thonius died, and the Christians boasted that if not convinced he was at least killed by the arguments of Ætius.

(37) At this time the emperor himself on his Roman coins at the end of the eleventh century from the building of the city, did not refuse to mark the *happy renewal of the years* by the old Egyptian astrological fable of the return of the phœnix (see Fig. 120).

A.D. 347.

Mionnet, Méd. Rom.

Fig. 120.

(38) From the treatise of Julius Fermicus against the pagan superstitions, it would seem that the sacred animals of the Egyptians were no longer kept in the several cities in which they used to be worshipped, and that many of the old gods had been gradually dropped from the mythology, which was then chiefly confined to the worship of Isis and Osiris. The great week of the year was the feast of Isis, when the priests joined the goddess in her grief for the loss of the good Osiris, who had been killed through jealousy by the wicked Typhon. The priests shaved their heads, beat their breasts, tore the skin off their arms, and opened up the old wounds of former years, in grief for the death of Osiris, and in honour of the widowed Isis. After some days' search for the scattered limbs of Osiris, which had been thrown by Typhon into the Nile, they are found by Isis, with the help of her sister Nephthys and the hunter Anubis; they are carefully buried; and the grief of the priests and worshippers is then turned into joy. The River Nile was also still worshipped for the blessings which it scatters along its banks; but we hear no more of Amun-Ra, Chem, Horus, Aroëris, and the other gods of the Thebaid, whose worship ceased with the fall of that part of the country.

(39) But great changes often take place with very little improvement; the fall of idolatry only made way for the rise of magic and astrology. Abydos in Upper Egypt had latterly gained great renown for the

Ammianus, lib. xix. 12.

temple of Besa, a god whose name is new to us, but whose oracle was much consulted, not only by the Egyptians but by Greek strangers, and by others who sent their questions in writing. Some of these letters on parchment had been taken from the temple by informers, and carried to the emperor, whose ears were never deaf to a charge against the pagans. On this accusation numbers of all ranks were dragged out of Egypt, to be tried and punished in Syria, with torture and forfeiture of goods. Such indeed was the nation's belief in these oracles and prophecies, that it gave to the priests a greater power than it was safe to trust them with. By prophesying that a man was to be an emperor they could make him a traitor, and perhaps raise a village in rebellion. As the devotedness of their followers made it dangerous for the magistrates to punish the mischief-makers, they had no choice but to punish those who consulted them. Without forbidding the divine oracle to answer, they forbade anybody to question it. Parnasius, who had been a prefect of Egypt, a man of spotless character, was banished for thus illegally seeking a knowledge of the future; and Demetrius Cythras, an aged philosopher, was put to the rack on a charge of having sacrificed to the god, and only released because he persisted through his tortures in asserting that he sacrificed in gratitude for blessings received, and not from a wish thus to learn his future fate.

(40) Hephæstion of Thebes may perhaps about this time have written his treatise on Astrology, in which he explains the influences of the several signs of the zodiac on us men who live beneath them. To every country in the world he gives its own sign, guided, however, as it would seem, by very little attention to its longitude, and yet perhaps led by the belief that the earth, like the heavens, might be divided into portions lying east and west. He divides each sign into three parts or decans, of ten degrees each, as we see the zodiac divided on the sculptured ceiling of the temple of Dendera, made in the reign of Tiberius. He says that the Egyptian astronomers gave to each of these thirty-six decans a name; and that the qualities of mind and accidents of life fell to every man according to what decan was rising heliacally at the time of his birth. He thus assigns to every man one out of thirty-

Camerarii Astrologica.

six lots in life; nor does he aim at greater exactness. Such was the knowledge for which foreigners now looked to Egypt.

(41) In the falling state of the empire the towns and villages of Egypt found their rulers too weak either to guard them or to tyrannise over them, and they sometimes formed themselves into small societies, and took means for their own defence. The law had so far allowed this as in some cases to grant a corporate constitution to a city. But in other cases a city kept in its pay a courtier or government servant powerful enough to guard it against the extortions of the provincial tax-gatherer, or would put itself under the patronage of a neighbour rich enough and strong enough to guard it. This, however, could not be allowed, even if not used as the means of throwing off the authority of the provincial government; and accordingly at this time we begin to find laws against the new crime of *patronage*. These associations gave a place of refuge to criminals, they stopped the worshipper in his way to the temple, and the tax-gatherer in collecting the tribute. But new laws have little weight when there is no power to enforce them, and the orders from Constantinople were little heeded in Upper Egypt. But this *patronage* which the emperor wished to put down was weak compared to that of the bishops and clergy, which the law allowed and even upheld, and which was the great check to the tyranny of the civil governor. While the emperor at a distance gave orders through his prefect, the people looked up to the bishop as their head; and hence the power of each was checked by the other. The emperors had not yet made the terrors of religion a tool in the hands of the magistrate; nor had they yet learned from the pontifex and augurs of pagan Rome the great secret that civil power is never so strong as when based on that of the church.

Codex Theod. xi. 24. 1.

(42) On the death of Constantius, JULIAN was at once acknowledged as emperor, and the Roman world was again, but for the last time, governed by a pagan. The Christians had been in power for fifty-five years under Constantine and his sons, during which time the pagans had been made to feel that their enemies had got the upper hand

A.D. 361.

of them. But on the accession of Julian their places were again changed; and the Egyptians among others crowded to Constantinople to complain of injustice done by the Christian prefect and bishop, and to pray for a redress of wrongs. They were, however, sadly disappointed in their emperor; he put them off with an unfeeling joke; he ordered them to meet him at Chalcedon, on the other side of the Straits of Constantinople, and instead of following them according to his promise, he gave orders that no vessel should bring an Egyptian from Chalcedon to the capital; and the Egyptians, after wasting their time and money, returned home in despair. But though their complaints were laughed at they were not overlooked, and the author of their grievances was punished; Artemius, the prefect of Egypt, was summoned to Chalcedon, and not being able to disprove the crimes laid to his charge by the Alexandrians, he paid his life as the forfeit for his misgovernment during the last reign. Ammianus, lib. xxii.

(43) While Artemius was on his trial the pagans of Alexandria remained quiet, and in daily fear of his return to power, for after their treatment at Chalcedon they by no means felt sure of what would be the emperor's policy in matters of religion; but they no sooner heard of the death of Artemius than they took it as a sign that they had full leave to revenge themselves on the Christians. The mob rose first against the bishop George, who had lately been careless or wanton enough publicly to declare his regret that any of their temples should be allowed to stand; and they seized him in the streets and trampled him to death. They next slew Dracontius, the prefect of the Alexandrian mint, whom they accused of overturning a pagan altar within that building. Their anger was then turned against Diodorus, who was employed in building a church on a waste spot of ground that had once been sacred to the worship of Mithra, but had since been given by the Emperor Constantius to the Christians. In clearing the ground, the workmen had turned up a number of human bones that had been buried there in former ages, and these had been brought forward by the Christians in reproach against the pagans as so many proofs of human sacrifices. Diodorus also, in his Christian zeal, had wounded at the Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. Ammianus, lib. xxii.

same time their pride and superstition, by cutting off the single lock from the heads of the young Egyptians. This lock had in the time of Rameses been the mark of youthful royalty; under the Ptolemies the mark of high rank; but was now common to all. Diodorus treated it as an offence against his religion. For this he was attacked and killed, with George and Dracontius. The mob carried the bodies of the three murdered men upon camels to the side of the lake, and there burned them, and threw the ashes into the water, for fear, as they said, that a church should be built over their remains, as had been sometimes done over the bodies of martyrs.

(44) When the news of this outrage against the laws was brought to the philosophical emperor, he contented himself with threatening by an imperial edict that if the offence were repeated, he would visit it with severe punishment. But in every act of Julian we trace the scholar and the lover of learning. George had employed his wealth in getting together a large library, rich in historians, rhetoricians, and philosophers of all sects; and, on the murder of the bishop, Julian wrote letter after letter to Alexandria, to beg the prefect and his friend Porphyrius to save these books, and send them to him in Cappadocia. He promised freedom to the librarian if he gave them up, and torture if he hid them; and further begged that no books in favour of Christianity should be destroyed, lest other and better books should be lost with them.

Juliani Epistolæ.

(45) There is too much reason to believe that the friends of Athanasius were not displeased at the murder of the bishop George and their Arian fellow-Christians; at any rate they made no effort to save them, and the same mob that had put to death George as an enemy to paganism, now joined his rival Athanasius in a triumphal entry into the city, when, with the other Egyptian bishops, he was allowed to return from banishment. Athanasius could brook no rival to his power; the civil force of the city was completely overpowered by his party, and the Arian clergy were forced to hide themselves, as the only means of saving their lives. But, while thus in danger from their enemies, the Arians proceeded to elect a successor to their murdered bishop, and they chose Lucius to that post of honour, but of danger. Athanasius, however, in reality and

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

openly filled the office of bishop; and he summoned a synod at Alexandria, at which he readmitted into the church Lucifer and Eusebius, two bishops who had been banished to the Thebaid, and he again decreed that the three persons in the Trinity were of one substance.

(46) Though the Emperor Julian thought that George, the late bishop, had deserved all that he suffered, as having been zealous in favour of Christianity, and forward in putting down paganism and in closing the temples, yet he was still more opposed to Athanasius. That able churchman held his power as a rebel, by the help of the Egyptian mob, against the wishes of the Greeks of Alexandria and against the orders of the late emperor; and Julian made an edict, ordering that he should be driven out of the city within twenty-four hours of the command reaching Alexandria. The prefect of Egypt was at first unable or unwilling to enforce these orders against the wish of the inhabitants; and Athanasius was not driven into banishment till Julian wrote word that, if the rebellious bishop were to be found in any part of Egypt after a day then named, he would fine the prefect and the officers under him one hundred pounds weight of gold. Thus Athanasius was for the fourth time banished from Alexandria; first by Constantine, who was willing to receive his own creed; twice by Constantius, who held the Arian opinions; and now again by the pagan Julian.

Epist. ad Pop. Alex.

Edict. ad Alexandr.

Epist. ad Edicium.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

(47) Though the Christians were out of favour with the emperor, and never were employed in any office of trust, yet they were too numerous for him to venture on a persecution. But Julian allowed them to be ill-treated by his prefects, and took no notice of their complaints. He made a law, forbidding any Christians being educated in pagan literature, believing that ignorance would stop the spread of their religion. In the churches of Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria, this was felt as a heavy grievance; but it was less thought of in Egypt. Science and learning were less cultivated by the Christians in Alexandria since the overthrow of the Arian party; and a little later, to charge a writer with Græcising was the same as saying that he wanted orthodoxy.

G. Syncel. lus.

(48) Julian was a warm friend to learning and philosophy among the pagans. He recalled to Alexandria the physician Zeno, who in the last reign had fled from the Georgian faction, as the Christians were then called. He founded in the same city a college for music, and ordered the prefect Ecdicius to look out for some young men of skill in that science, particularly from among the pupils of Dioscorus; and he allotted them a maintenance from the treasury, with rewards for the most skilful. At Canopus, a pagan philosopher, Antoninus, the son of Eustathius, taking advantage of the turn in public opinion, and copying the Christian monks of the Thebaid, drew round him a crowd of followers by his self-denial and painful torture of the body. The Alexandrians flocked in crowds to his dwelling; and such was his character for holiness, that his death, in the beginning of the reign of Theodosius, was thought by the Egyptians to be the cause of the overthrow of paganism.

Epist. xiv.

Epist. lvi.

Eunapius, Vit. Soph.

(49) But Egyptian paganism, which had slumbered for fifty years under the Christian emperors, was not again to be awakened to its former life. Though the wars between the several cities for the honour of their gods, the bull, the crocodile, or the fish, had never ceased, all reverence for those gods was dead. The sacred animals, in particular the bulls Apis and Mnevis, were again waited upon by their priests as of old, but it was a vain attempt on the part of the pagans. Not only was the Egyptian religion overthrown, but the Thebaid, the country of that religion, was fallen too low to be again raised. The people of Upper Egypt had lost all heart, not more from the tyranny of the Roman government in the north than from the attacks and settlement of the Arabs in the south. All changes in the country, whether for the better or the worse, were laid to the charge of these latter unwelcome neighbours; and when the inquiring traveller asked to be shown the crocodile, the river-horse, and the other animals for which Egypt had once been noted, he was told with a sigh that they were seldom to be seen in the Delta since the Thebaid had been peopled with the Blemmyes. Falsehood, the usual vice of slaves, had taken a deep hold on the Egyptian character. A denial of their

Athanasius, contra Gentes.

Ammianus, lib. xxii.

wealth was the means by which they usually tried to save it from the Roman tax-gatherer; and an Egyptian was ashamed of himself as a coward, if he could not show a back covered with stripes gained in the attempt to save his money. Peculiarities of character often descend unchanged in a nation for many centuries; and, after fourteen hundred years of the same slavery, the same stripes from the lash of the tax-gatherer are still the boast of the Egyptian peasant. Cyrene was already a desert; the only cities of note in Upper Egypt were Coptos, Hermopolis, and Antinoopolis; but Alexandria was still the queen of cities, though the large quarter called the Bruchium had not been rebuilt; and the Serapium, with its library of seven hundred thousand volumes, was, after the capitol of Rome, the chief building in the world.

Lane's Egypt.

(50) This temple of Serapis was situated on a rising ground at the west end of the city, and though not built like a fortification, was sometimes called the citadel of Alexandria. It was entered by two roads; that on one side was a slope for carriages, and on the other a grand flight of a hundred steps from the street, with each step wider than that below it. At the top of this flight of steps was a portico, in the form of a circular roof, upheld by four columns. Through this was the entrance into the great courtyard, in the middle of which stood the roofless hall or temple, surrounded by columns and porticoes, inside and out. In some of the inner porticoes were the book-cases for the library which made Alexandria the very temple of science and learning, while other porticoes were dedicated to the service of the ancient religion. The roofs were ornamented with gilding, the capitals of the columns were of copper gilt, and the walls were covered with paintings. In the middle of the inner area stood one lofty column, which could be seen by all the country round, and even from ships some distance out at sea. The great statue of Serapis, which had been made under the Ptolemies, having perhaps marble feet, but for the rest built of wood, clothed with drapery, and glittering with gold and silver, stood in one of the covered chambers, which had a small window so contrived as to let the sun's rays kiss the lips of the statue on the appointed occasions. This was one

Aphthonius Sophistes.

Rufinus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xi. 23.

of the tricks employed in the sacred mysteries, to dazzle the worshipper by the sudden blaze of light which on the proper occasions was let into the dark room. The temple itself, with its fountain, its two obelisks, and its gilt ornaments, has long since been destroyed; and the column in the centre, under the name of Pompey's pillar, alone remains to mark the spot where it stood, and is one of the few works of Greek art which in size and strength vie with the old Egyptian monuments.

(51) The reign of Julian, instead of raising paganism to its former strength, had only shown that its life was gone; and under JOVIAN, his successor, the Christians were again brought into power. A Christian emperor, however, would have been but little welcome to the Egyptians if, like Constantius, and even Constantine in his latter years, he had leaned to the Arian party; but Jovian soon showed his attachment to the Nicene Creed, and he reappointed Athanasius to the bishopric of Alexandria. But though Athanasius regained his rank, yet the Arian bishop Lucius was not deposed. Each party in Alexandria had its own bishop; those who thought that the Son was of the *same* substance with the Father looked up to Athanasius, while those who gave to Jesus the lower rank of being of a *similar* substance to the Creator obeyed Lucius.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. 4.

A.D. 363.

(52) We must not, however, be led away by words to think that a disagreement on this curious metaphysical proposition was the only cause of the quarrel which divided Egypt into such angry parties. The creeds were made use of as the watchwords in a political struggle. Blood, language, and geographical boundaries divided the parties; and religious opinions seldom cross these unchanging lines. Every Egyptian believed in the Nicene Creed and the incorruptibility of the body of Jesus, and hated the Alexandrian Greeks; while the more refined Greeks were as united in explaining away the Nicene Creed by the doctrine of the two natures of Christ, and in despising the ignorant Egyptians. Christianity, which speaks so forcibly to the poor, the unlearned, and the slave, had educated the Egyptian population, had raised them in their own eyes;

and, as the popular party gained strength, the Arians lost ground in Alexandria. At the same time the Greeks were falling off in learning and in science, and in all those arts of civilisation which had given them the superiority. Like other great political changes, this may not have been understood at the time; but in less than a hundred years it was found that the Egyptians were no longer the slaves, nor the Greeks the masters.

(53) On the death of Jovian, when Valentinian divided the Roman empire with his brother, he took Italy and the West for his own kingdom, and gave to Valens Egypt and the eastern provinces, in which Greek was the language of the government. Each emperor adopted the religion of his capital; Valentinian held the Nicene faith, and Valens the Arian faith; and unhappy Egypt was the only part of the empire whose religion differed from that of its rulers. Had the creeds marked the limits of the two empires, Egypt would have belonged to Rome; but, as geographical boundaries and language form yet stronger ties, Egypt was given to Constantinople, or rather to Antioch, the nearer of the two eastern capitals. This year was marked by the Christians rather violently taking possession of the Roman palace in Alexandria, named the Cæsarium, for a church. This was the cause of sad riots between them and the pagans, who in the next year burnt it to the ground. But in the year following it was granted to the Christians by the emperor, and rebuilt for them by his orders.

Zosimus, lib. iv. A.D. 364.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

Chronicon Athanas. Syriac.

(54) By Valens, Athanasius was forced for the fifth time to fly from Alexandria, to avoid the displeasure which his disobedience again drew down upon him. But his flock again rose in rebellion in favour of their popular bishop; and the emperor was either persuaded or frightened into allowing him to return to his bishopric, where he spent the few remaining years of his life in peace. Athanasius died at an advanced age, leaving a name more famous than that of any one of the emperors under whom he lived. He taught the Christian world that there was a power greater than that of kings, namely the church. He was often beaten in the struggle,

but every victory over him was followed by the defeat of the civil power; he was five times banished, but five times he returned in triumph. The temporal power of the church was then nearly new; it only rose upon the conversion of Constantine, and it was weak compared to what it became in after ages; but, when an emperor of Germany did penance barefoot before Pope Hildebrand, and a king of England was whipped at Becket's tomb, we only witness the full-grown strength of the infant power that was being reared by the bishop of Alexandria. His writings are numerous and wholly controversial, chiefly against the Arians. The Athanasian Creed seems to have been so named only because it was thought to contain his opinions, as it is known to be by a later author. He was not a man to shudder at its declaration of our Heavenly Father's eternal wrath against those who held any other opinions; but yet it is not likely that he would have wholly approved of it, as it does not state that "the Son is of one substance with the Father," words which he thought all-important as a bulwark against the Arians, and for which he would willingly have laid down his life.

(55) On the death of Athanasius, the Homoousian party chose Peter as his successor in the bishopric, overlooking Lucius, the Arian bishop, whose election had been approved by the emperors Julian, Jovian, and Valens. But as the Egyptian church had lost its great champion, the emperor ventured to reassert his authority. He sent Peter to prison, and ordered all the churches to be given up to the Arians, threatening with banishment from Egypt whoever disobeyed his edict. The persecution which the Homoousian party throughout Upper Egypt then suffered from the Arians equalled, says the ecclesiastical historian, anything they had before suffered from the pagans. Every monastery in Egypt was broken open by Lucius at the head of an armed force, and the cruelty of the bishop surpassed that of the soldiers. Men, of whose virtues the world was not worthy, were stript, beaten, stoned, and put to the sword; and the Homoousian monks, in revenge, when praying for success in working miracles, used to call upon the name of "Jesus Christ, whom Lucius persecuted." But the list of cruelties makes us doubt the truth of the tale; we

Rufinus, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. 4.

must choose between one party being violent enough to act so wickedly, or the other party being violent enough to accuse them falsely of it; and though theological hatred has been the cause of many outrages, they have fortunately been more often inflicted by the pen than by the sword. We must hope that Lucius was innocent of some of the crimes thus laid to his charge; but we have no further knowledge of his character; he is unknown as an author, and wrote little beside his Paschal letters to his churches. The breaking open of the monasteries above spoken of seems to have been for the purpose of making the inmates bear their share in the military service of the state, rather than for any religious reasons. When Constantine embraced Christianity, he at once recognised all the religious scruples of its professors; and not only the bishops and presbyters but all laymen who had entered the monastic orders were freed from the duty of serving in the army. But under the growing dislike of military service, and the difficulty of finding soldiers, when to escape from the army many called themselves Christian monks, this excuse could no longer be listened to, and Valens made a law that monastic vows should not save a man from enlistment. But this law was not easily carried into force in the monasteries on the borders of the desert, which were often well-built and well-guarded fortresses; and on Mount Nitria, in particular, many monks lost their lives in their resistance to the troops that were sent to fetch recruits.

Hieronymus, Cat. Scriptor.

Orosius, lib. vii. 33.

Codex Theod. xii. 1, 63.

Eusebii Chronicon.

(56) The monastic institutions of Egypt had already reached their full growth. They were acknowledged by the laws of the empire as ecclesiastical corporations, and allowed to hold property; and by a new law of this reign, if a monk or nun died without a will or any known kindred, the property went to the monastery as heir at law. One of the most celebrated of these monasteries was at Tabenna, in the Thebaid, where Pachomius, after meditating for some years alone in a cave, had gathered round him thirteen hundred followers, who owned him as the founder of their order, and gave him credit for the gift of prophecy. His disciples in the other monasteries of Upper Egypt amounted to six thousand more.

Codex Theod. v. 3.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

His laws were of the severest kind, as best fitted to keep the thoughts always turned to heaven. The monks were clothed in skins, they prayed twelve times a day, they worked laboriously with their hands, and ate but little. The monas-

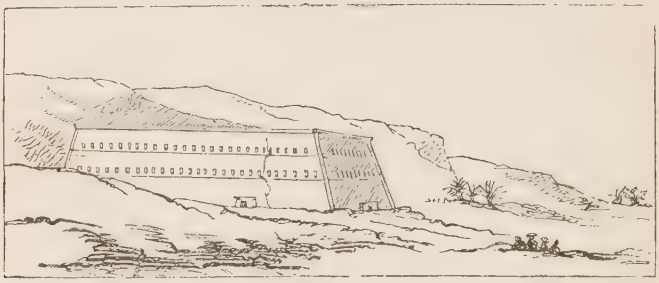


Fig. 121.

tery of Tabenna, or more correctly of Tabennesi, *the city of Isis*, was probably that now known by the name of the White Monastery. This is situated near Aphroditopolis, and was built by the help of stones which had before formed part of the old temples. It is a large and strong building, with four straight walls carrying a heavy cornice. It is entered by three doors, and has fifty-two windows on each side, and eighteen on the front (see Fig. 121). Within it is a church with a long gallery on one side of it, in which dwelt the monks. The church is in the form of a cross, having a nave between two rows of granite columns, each sixteen in number, which separate it from the side aisles. Beyond is the transept, and at the end is a semicircular choir with a chapel on each side of it. At the other end are another chapel and a baptistery (see Fig. 122). The choir is paved with marble, and the nave with

Denon, pl. 32, 93.

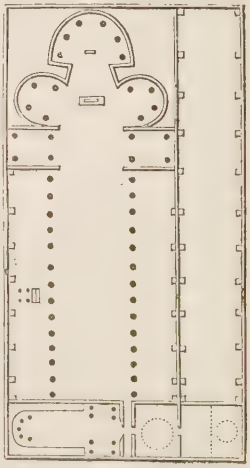


Fig. 122.

granite covered with hieroglyphics, which, however, the tread of fifty generations of monks has worn too smooth for us now to read. On the outside, this monastery is not unlike an Egyptian temple; but for the inside the architect seems to have shunned the forms of the country, and to have thought the Greek and Roman details were more suitable for a Christian building.

(57) The divine Anuph was at the head of another order of monks, and he boasted that he could by prayer obtain from heaven whatever he wished. Hor was at the head of another monastery, where, though wholly unable to read or write, he spent his life in singing psalms, and, as his followers and perhaps he himself believed, in working miracles. Serapion was at the head of a thousand monks in the Arsinoite nome, who raised their food by their own labour, and shared it with their poorer neighbours. Near Nitria, a place in the Mareotic nome which gave its name to the nitre springs, there were as many as fifty cells; but those who aimed at greater solitude and severer mortification withdrew further into the desert, to Scetis in the same nome, a spot already sanctified by the trials and triumphs of St. Anthony. Here, in a monastery surrounded by the sands, by the side of a lake whose waters are salter than the brine of the ocean, with no grass or trees to rest the aching eye, where the dazzling sky is seldom relieved with a cloud, where the breezes are too often laden with dry dust, where the works of nature seem to teach rather God's power than his goodness, these monks cultivated a gloomy religion, with hearts painfully attuned to the scenery around them. Here dwelt Moses, who in his youth had been a remarkable sinner, and in his old age became even more remarkable as a saint. It was said that for six years he spent every night in prayer, without once closing his eyes in sleep; and that one night, when his cell was attacked by four robbers, he carried them all off at once on his back to the neighbouring monastery to be punished, because he would himself hurt no man. Benjamin also dwelt at Scetis; he consecrated oil to heal the diseases of those who washed with it, and during the eight months that he was himself dying of a dropsy, he touched for their diseases all who came to the door of his cell to be healed. Hellas carried fire in his bosom without burning

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

his clothes. Elias spent seventy years in solitude on the borders of the Arabian desert near Antinoopolis. Apelles was a blacksmith near Achoris; he was tempted by the devil in the form of a beautiful woman, but he scorched the tempter's face with a red-hot iron. Apollos spent forty years in solitude, and the account of his life and miracles was written by Timotheus, bishop of Alexandria. Dorotheus, who though a Theban had settled near Alexandria, mortified his flesh by trying to live without sleep. He never willingly lay down to rest, nor indeed ever slept till the weakness of the body sunk under the efforts of the spirit. Paul, who dwelt at Pherma, repeated three hundred prayers every day, and kept three hundred pebbles in a bag to help him in his reckoning. He was the friend of Anthony, and when dying begged to be wrapt in the cloak given him by that holy monk, who had himself received it as a present from Athanasius. His friends and admirers claimed for Paul the honour of being the first Christian hermit, and they maintained their improbable opinion by asserting that he had been a monk for ninety-seven years, and that he had retired to the desert at the age of sixteen, when the church was persecuted in the reign of Valerian. At a time when our modern plan of registering births was unknown, it was of course difficult to disprove such an assertion, particularly when supported by the authority of Jerome.

Hieronymus, Vita Pauli.

(58) The unceasing prayers and sufferings of these monks drew after them the admiration of those who had not the zeal and strength to copy their painful self-denial. Men that would have grumbled at the partial weakness of an emperor, for promoting officers who echoed his praises in the palaces of Constantinople rather than those who executed his orders under an African sun, were unwise enough to fancy their heavenly Sovereign better pleased with continual worship than with active usefulness. All Egypt believed that the monks were the especial favourites of heaven, that they worked miracles, and that divine wisdom flowed from their lips without the help or hindrance of human learning. They were all Homoousians, believing that the Son was of one substance with the Father; some as Trinitarians holding the opinions of Athanasius; some as Sabellians believing that Jesus was the creator of the world, and that his body

was not liable to corruption; some as anthropomorphites believing that God was of a human form like Jesus; but all warmly attached to the Nicene Creed, denying the two natures of Christ, and hating the Arian Greeks of Alexandria and the other cities. Gregory of Nazianzus remarks that Egypt was the most Christ-loving of countries, and adds with true simplicity that, wonderful to say, after having so lately worshipped bulls, goats, and crocodiles, it was now teaching the world the worship of the Trinity in the truest form. Among these monks, however, there were some few men of learning. Macarius the Egyptian, who was so called to distinguish him from Macarius the Alexandrian, is one of the best known of the monks of Mount Nitria. He has left behind him fifty homilies, and a volume on Christian Perfection which places him in the first rank among the writers on practical Christianity. He was strictly of the Athanasian party; but, while the writings of his brethren are too much filled with reproaches against their adversaries and with extravagant praises of the lives and miracles of the monks, the works of Macarius breathe the purest love of God and of his neighbour. Evagrius also, who had studied under both Macarius of Alexandria and Macarius of Egypt, wrote on the Gnostic philosophy, as well as a history of the monks; and his pupil Palladius wrote a history of the monasteries of Egypt.

Oratio in Ægypt.

Suidas.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

(59) To visit some of these monasteries was a not uncommon journey with the earnest Christians of other countries who had the means of travelling. Rufinus, a young student of Aquileia on the Adriatic, near the modern city of Trieste, was fired with the wish of examining their way of life, and he was so fortunate as to meet with a wealthy widow in Rome, who was willing to accompany him and to bear the cost of the journey. They sailed together to Alexandria, and Rufinus then with some male companions ventured on the more difficult journey through the Thebaid. At Oxyrinchus he found a city wholly devoted to religion. There were twelve churches there. There was no tower, no gate, no corner of the place, that was not made use of for monks' cells. The great temples, in which the sacred animals used to be worshipped,

Vitæ Patrum; Rosweid, lib. ii.

were now Christian monasteries. The religion was changed, but not the people's habits. The bishop told Rufinus that there were ten thousand monks and twenty thousand nuns in the city. From this crowd of holy people he went to the solitary cell of Theon, a monk learned in the Greek, Latin, and Coptic languages. He spent three days at Lycopolis in a cell at the top of a steep rock with a monk named John, whose fame was such that the Roman general at Syene consulted him as to when he should give battle to the Ethiopians on the frontier. He visited the large monastery at Tabenna near Thebes, where three thousand silent monks dwelt under the government of Ammon. The monastery near Hermopolis held five hundred monks, who were of a more cultivated order in society than the others. Neglect of cleanliness formed no part of their monastic rule; their garments were as clean as their hearts were pure. Apollonius, their well-informed superior, explained to Rufinus much of the old religion and ceremonies, and the worship of animals. Near Hermopolis, however, paganism was still flourishing, and the monastery was in a state of warfare with the neighbouring villages, and with the priests in the great temple of that city. When the travellers left the monastery Apollonius kindly sent with them three interpreters to show them the other Coptic monasteries which they wished to see, and to help them to the information that they wanted. On their route they examined several monasteries in towns of which they did not know the names, one on a rock overhanging the river, one in a walled garden with wells and fruit-trees. They visited Elias in his cave near Antinoopolis, and then the monastery near Heracleopolis. In the Arsinoite nome, as in Oxyrinchus, they found the whole population under monastic vows, but at the same time industrious cultivators of that fertile province, and sending the produce to the Alexandrian market. In the neighbourhood of Memphis and Babylon were an equally large number of monks; and there Rufinus was shown the pyramids, as the granaries in which the patriarch Joseph had stored his corn. He lastly visited Mount Nitria, whose monasteries were more famous than any other in Egypt. He returned in safety to Alexandria, thankful for the sight of so much religious zeal and for having escaped the dangers of the

journey. From thence he led his noble patroness to Jerusalem, to warm their piety with the sight of spots which will always be sacred in the eyes of the Christian.

(60) We must not hastily judge the extravagance of the monks without taking into account the moral state of the country. We may believe the historians, or we may satisfy ourselves from the codes of the empire, that the monks were thought a blessing to the times in which they lived. The success which followed upon this preaching of an extreme asceticism only proves the grossness of the vice that it was meant to cure. While every luxury of the body was cultivated as the chief end of life, the monks preached and practised fasting and a neglect of dress. While scurrilous jokes, witty scandal, and ill-natured epigrams were the chief ornaments of conversation, the monks practised solitary silence and prayer. While the sacred tie of marriage was so little known that the population fell off, and mind and body were alike ruined by debauchery, the monks preached celibacy. While riches were so much more gained by fraud than by honest industry that every rich man was thought to have been either a rogue or the heir to a rogue, the monks practised personal poverty or a community of goods. Monkish institutions spread because they were found useful, but their being found useful proves the low state of morals at the time. Among the good works that the monks recommended was the support of the helpless poor; and they were in some cases trusted to receive the alms and to distribute them. In the neighbourhood of Lycopolis the cultivators of the soil brought these freewill offerings to the Abbot John, and among the willing givers was Theon, who afterwards became a monk himself. They usually gave a tenth part of the land's produce, being no doubt led to fix upon that proportion by the enactments of the Mosaic law in favour of the Levites. This pious plan for the help of the poor spread rapidly not only over Egypt, but over the rest of Christendom. After a time, however, the tithes were divided into three parts, one only for the poor, one for the fabric of the church, and one for the priest. At a yet later time they were claimed by the priests for their own use; and Selden in his History of Tithes has shown that the origin of the present legal tax of a tenth

Cassianus, Collat. XXI. 1, 2.

part of the land's produce, for the maintenance of the clergy, is to be found in the freewill gifts for the poor which were intrusted to John the monk of Lycopolis.

Hieronym. Epist. xviii.

(61) Of the three kinds of monks, the Cœnobites, who lived in large monasteries, the Anchorites or hermits, who dwelt alone in the desert, and the Remoboth, who dwelt three or four together in cities, the first two maintained their character for holiness. The Cœnobites, if ever they longed after the pleasures which they had forsworn, were saved by their strict rules and by their obedience to their superiors, and the Anchorites by their solitude. But the Remoboth, living among the crowd and professing holiness superior to that of their fellow-citizens, sooner fell into those vices which monks in all ages have been more or less guilty of. They were charged with hypocrisy, a love of good living, with hoarding wealth while professing poverty, and with quarrelling with the clergy; and, after thus losing character, the name and institution went out of use.

(62) As the Egyptian government was now crumbling to pieces with slow but sure decay, the magistrates were discouraged and lost much of their weight with the people. The church, with its bishops, priests, and deacons, was the only framework left to society which had any strength or life. The clergy rose into civil importance. From the codes of the empire we learn that the emperor's edicts were as much addressed to the bishops and priests as to the magistrates. But the spiritual powers did not always act in harmony with the civil powers. The separation of the two, which in a settled state of society might have been an advantage, as leaving thought and conscience more free, in these unhappy times was a misfortune, as neither was strong enough to get its laws obeyed and to check vice and disorder. During these reigns of weakness and misgovernment, it was no doubt a cruel policy rather than humanity, that led the tax-gatherers to collect the tribute in kind. More could be squeezed out of a ruined people by taking what they had to give than by requiring it to be paid in copper coin. Hence Valens made a law that no tribute throughout the empire should be taken in money; and he laid a new land-tax upon Egypt, to the amount of a soldier's clothing for every thirty acres.

Codex Theodos. xi. 2. vii. 6.

(63) The pagans, who were now no longer able to worship publicly as they chose, took care to proclaim their opinions indirectly in such ways as the law could not reach. In the hippodrome, which was the noisiest of the places where the people met in public, they made a profession of their faith by the choice of which horses they bet on; and Christians and pagans alike showed their zeal for religion by hooting and clapping of hands. Prayers and superstitious ceremonies were used on both sides to add to the horses' speed; and the monk Hilarion, the pupil of Anthony, gained no little credit for sprinkling holy water on the horses of his party, and thus enabling Christianity to outrun paganism in the hippodrome at Gaza. Hieronym. Vit. Hilarion.

(64) The Saracens had for some time past been encroaching on the eastern frontiers of the empire, and had only been kept back by treaties which proved the weakness of the Romans, as the armies of Constantinople were still called, and which encouraged the barbarians in their attacks. On the death of their king, the command over the Saracens fell to their queen Mævia, who broke the last treaty, laid waste Palestine and Phenicia with her armies, conquered or gained over the Arabs of Petra, and pressed upon the Egyptians at the head of the Red Sea. On this, Valens renewed the truce, but on terms still more favourable to the invaders. Many of the Saracens were Christians, and by an article of the treaty they were to have a bishop granted them for their church, and for this purpose they sent Moses to Alexandria to be ordained. But the Saracens sided with the Egyptians, in religion as well as policy, against the Arian Greeks. Hence Moses refused to be ordained by Lucius the patriarch of Alexandria, and chose rather to receive his appointment from some of the Homoousian bishops who were living in banishment in the Thebaid. Darkness and ignorance were thus spreading themselves over the earth; and after this advance of the barbarians the interesting city of Petra, which since the time of Trajan had been in the power or the friendship of Rome or Constantinople, was lost to the civilised world. This rocky fastness, which was ornamented with temples (see Fig. 75), a triumphal arch, and a theatre, and had been a bishop's see, was henceforth closed against Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

all travellers; it had no place in the map till it was discovered by Burckhardt in our own days without a human being dwelling in it, with oleanders and tamarisks choking up its entrance through the cliff, and with brambles trailing their branches over the rock-hewn temples.

Fig. 123.—The Date Palm of Lower Egypt.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE REIGNS OF THEODOSIUS I., ARCADIUS, AND THEODOSIUS II.
A.D. 379—450.

(1) The reign of Theodosius is remarkable for the blow then given to paganism. The old religion had been sinking even before Christianity had become the religion of the emperors; it had been discouraged by Constantine, who had closed many of the temples; but Theodosius made a law in the first year of his reign that the whole of the empire should be Christian, and moreover should receive the Trinitarian faith. He soon afterwards ordered that Sunday should be kept holy, and forbade all work and law proceedings on that day; and he sent Cynegius, the prefect of the palace, into Egypt, to see these laws carried into effect in that province.

A.D. 379.

Codex Theod. xvi. 1, 2. viii. 8, 3.

Zosimus, lib iv.

(2) The wishes of the emperor were ably followed up by Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria. He cleansed the temple of Mithra, and overthrew the statues in the celebrated temple of Serapis, which seemed the very citadel of paganism. He also exposed to public ridicule the mystic ornaments and statues which a large part of his fellow-citizens still regarded as sacred. It was not, however, to be supposed that this could be peaceably borne by a people so irritable as the Alexandrians. The students in the schools of philosophy put themselves at the head of the mob to stop the work of destruction, and to revenge themselves against their assailants. Several battles were fought in the streets between the pagans and the Christians, in which both parties lost many lives; but, as the Christians were supported by the power of the prefect, the pagans were routed, and many whose rank would have made them objects of punishment were forced to fly from Alexandria. Among these were Ammonius, the author of a valuable work on Greek synonyms, and Helladius, the author of a biographical

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

dictionary, which forms a part of the larger dictionary of Suidas.

(3) No sooner had the troops under the command of the prefect put down the pagan opposition than the work of destruction was again carried forward by the zeal of the bishop. The temples were broken open, their ornaments destroyed, and the statues of the gods melted for the use of the Alexandrian church. One statue of an Egyptian god was alone saved from the wreck, and was set up in mockery of those who had worshipped it; and this ridicule of their religion was a cause of greater anger to the pagans than even the destruction of the other statues. The great statue of Serapis, which was made of wood covered with plates of metal, was knocked to pieces by the axes of the soldiers. The head and limbs were broken off, and the wooden trunk was burnt in the amphitheatre amid the shouts and jeers of the bystanders. A colossal foot of white marble, which was brought from Alexandria, and is now in the British Museum, may be guessed from its size to have been part of this patchwork statue.

Rufinus, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. 23.

(4) In the plunder of the temple of Serapis, the great library of more than seven hundred thousand volumes was wholly broken up and scattered. Orosius, the Spaniard, who visited Alexandria in the next reign, and was the author of a short universal history full of bigotry and mistakes, may be trusted when he says that he saw in the temple the empty shelves, which, within the memory of men then living, had been plundered of the books that had formerly been got together after the library of the Bruchium was burnt by Julius Cæsar. In a work of such lawless plunder, carried on by ignorant zealots, many of these monuments of pagan genius and learning must have been wilfully or accidentally destroyed, though the larger number may have been carried off by the Christians for the other public and private libraries of the city. How many other libraries this city of science may have possessed we are not told, but there were no doubt many. Had Alexandria during the next two centuries given birth to poets and orators, their works, the offspring of native genius, might perhaps have been written without the help of libraries; but the labours of the mathematicians and grammarians prove

Lib. vii. 36.

Lib. vi. 15.

that the city was still well furnished with books, beside those on the Christian controversies.

(5) It would be dishonest not to point out in each persecution, whether by the pagans or by the Christians, the superiority in worth and character of the oppressed over their persecutors. When the Christians were persecuted by the pagans, none but men of unblemished lives and unusual strength of mind stood to their religion in the day of trial, and suffered the penalties of the law; the weak, the ignorant, and the vicious readily joined in the superstitions required of them, and embracing the religion of the stronger party, easily escaped punishment. So it was when the pagans of Alexandria were persecuted by Bishop Theophilus; the chief sufferers were the men of learning, in whose minds paganism was a pure deism, and who saw nothing but ignorance and superstition on the side of their oppressors; who thought their worship of the Trinity only a new form of polytheism, and jokingly declared that they were not arithmeticians enough to understand it. Olympius, who was the priest of Serapis when the temple was sacked, and as such the head of the pagans of Alexandria, was a man in every respect the opposite of the Bishop Theophilus. He was of a frank open countenance and agreeable manners; and though his age might have allowed him to speak among his followers in the tone of command, he chose rather in his moral lessons to use the mild persuasion of an equal; and few hearts were so hardened as not to be led into the path of duty by his exhortations. Whereas the furious monks, says the indignant pagan, were men only in form, but swine in manners. Whoever put on a black coat, and was not ashamed to be seen with dirty linen, gained a tyrannical power over the minds of the mob, from their belief in his holiness; and these men attacked the temples of the gods as a propitiation for their own enormous sins. Thus each party reproached the other, and often unjustly. Among other religious frauds and pretended miracles of which the pagan priests were accused, was the having an iron statue of Serapis kept hanging in the air in a chamber of the temple, by means of a loadstone fixed in the ceiling. The natural difficulties shield them from this charge, but other accusations are not so easily rebutted.

Suidas.

Eunapius, Vit. Sophist.

Rufinus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xi. 23.

(6) After this attack upon the pagans, their religion was no longer openly taught in Alexandria. Some of the more zealous professors withdrew from the capital to Canopus, about ten miles distant, where the ancient priestly learning was still taught, unpersecuted because unnoticed; and there, under the pretence of studying hieroglyphics, a school was opened for teaching magic and other forbidden superstitions. When the pagan worship ceased throughout Egypt, the temples were very much used as

Rufinus, Eccl. His. lib. xi 26.

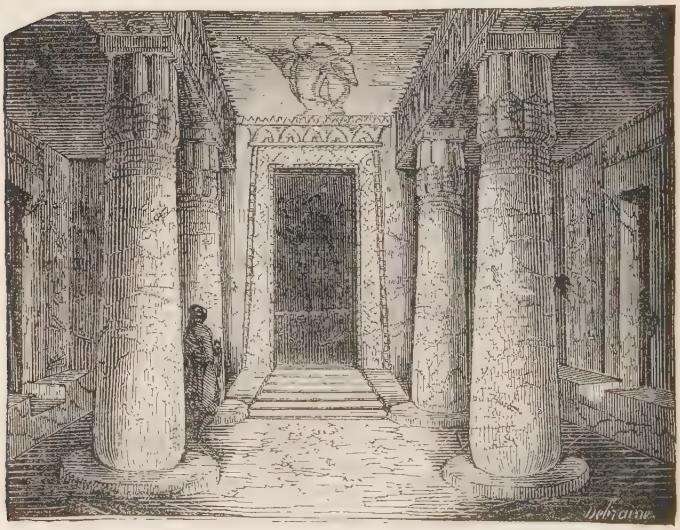


Fig. 124.

churches, and in some cases the old temples received in their ample courtyard a smaller church of Greek architecture, as in that of Medinet Abou. In other cases Christian ornaments were added to the old walls, as in the rock temple of Kneph, opposite to Abou Simbel, where the figure of our Saviour with a glory round his head has been painted on the ceiling (see Fig. 124). The Christians, in order to remove from before their eyes the memorials of the old superstition, covered up the sculpture on the walls with mud from the

Nile and white plaster. This coating we now take away, at a time when the idolatrous figures are no longer dangerous to religion, and we find the sculpture and painting fresh as when covered up fourteen hundred years ago.

(7) It would be unreasonable to suppose that the Egyptians, on embracing Christianity, at once threw off the whole of their pagan rites. Among other customs that they still clung to was that of making mummies of the bodies of the dead. St. Anthony had tried to dissuade the Christian converts from that practice; not because the mummy-cases were covered with pagan inscriptions; but he boldly asserted, what a very little reading would have disproved, that every mode of treating a dead body, besides burial, was forbidden in the Bible as wicked. St. Augustine, on the other hand, well understanding that the immortality of the soul without the body was little likely to be understood or valued by the ignorant, praises the Egyptians for that very practice, and says that they were the only Christians who really believed in the resurrection from the dead. The figures of the Virgin Mary standing on the new moon, as she ascends up to heaven, seem borrowed from the goddess Isis, who in her character of the Dog-star rises heliacally in the same manner (see page 342). The tapers even now burnt before the Roman Catholic altars had also from the earliest times been used to light up the splendours of the Egyptian altars, in the darkness of their temples, and had been burnt in still greater numbers in the yearly festival of the candles. The playful custom of giving away sugared cakes and sweetmeats on the twenty-fifth day of Tybi, our twentieth of January, was then changed to be kept fourteen days earlier, and it still marks with us the feast of Epiphany or Twelfth-night. The division of the people into clergy and laity, which was unknown to Greeks and Romans, was introduced to Christianity in the fourth century by the Egyptians. While the rest of Christendom were clothed in woollen, linen, the common dress of the Egyptians, was universally adopted by the clergy, as more becoming to the purity of their manners; "linen," says the book of Revelation, "is what is appointed for the saints." At the same time

Athanasius, Vit. Antonii.

Sermo 349, de Resurrec. cap. xii.

Heliodorus, Æthiopica, lib. i.

Herodotus, lib. ii. 62.

Moses Chorenensis, Hist. Arm. lib. iii. 62.

Ch. xix. 8.

the clergy copied the Egyptian priests in the custom of shaving the crown of the head bald. Two thousand years before the bishop of Rome pretended to hold the keys of heaven and hell, there was an Egyptian priest with the high-sounding title of Appointed Keeper of the two doors of heaven in the city of Thebes. It would be easy to point out other improvements or rather blots upon Christianity, which seem to be of Egyptian growth; and the mud of the Nile, as Homer remarks, was as fruitful of poisons as it was of medicines. Thus was brought about what has been called the spread of Christianity, but what was rather an union of the two religions or a compromise between the two parties. Wise and good men have doubted whether it helped or hindered the cause of the religion taught and practised by Jesus.

Artemidorus, Oneirocr. i. 23.

Egyptian Inscript. 59, 5; 69, A. 31.

(8) The new law in favour of Trinitarian Christianity was enforced with as great strictness against the Arians as against the pagans. The bishops and priests of that party were everywhere turned out of their churches, which were then given up to the Homoousians. Theodosius had been born in Spain and educated in the opinions of the Western church. He was a soldier, and he meant to be obeyed in the church as much as in the camp. He summoned a council of one hundred and fifty Eastern bishops at Constantinople, and ordered them to re-enact the Nicene Creed; and in the future religious rebellions of the Egyptians they always quoted against the Greeks this council of Constantinople, with that of Nicæa, as the foundation of their faith. By this religious policy, Theodosius did much to delay the fall of the empire. He won the friendship of his Egyptian subjects, as well as of their Saracen neighbours, all of whom, as far as they were Christian, held the Nicene faith. Egypt became the safest of his provinces; and, when his armies had been recruited with so many barbarians that they could no longer be trusted, these new levies were marched into Egypt under the command of Hormisdas, and an equal number of Egyptians were drafted out of the army of Egypt, and led into Thessaly.

Eusebii Chronicon.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. v.

Zosimus, lib. iv.

(9) When the season came for the overflow of the Nile, in

the first summer after the destruction of the temples, the waters happened to rise more slowly than usual; and the Egyptians laid the blame upon the Christian emperor, who had forbidden their sacrificing the usual offerings in honour of the river-god. The alarm for the loss of their crops carried more weight in the religious controversy than any arguments that could be brought against pagan sacrifices; and the anger of the people soon threatened a serious rebellion. Evagrius the prefect, in his doubts about the peace of the country, sent to Constantinople for orders; but the emperor remained firm, he would make no change in the law against paganism, and the fears of the Egyptians and Alexandrians were soon put an end to by a most plenteous overflow. Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

(10) Since the time of Athanasius, and the overthrow of the Arian party in Alexandria, the learning of that city was wholly in the hands of the pagans, and was chiefly mathematical. The writings of Theon, Pappus, and Diophantus are still known to the mathematician and the scholar. The time when Diophantus of Alexandria lived is unfortunately not well known; but it was not later than this reign. He wrote on arithmetic and algebra. He is the earliest writer on algebra whose works are now remaining to us, and has given his name to the Diophantine problems. Pappus wrote a description of the world, and a commentary on Ptolemy's Almagest, beside a work on geometry, published under the name of his Mathematical Collections. Theon was a professor in the Museum, and, beside other mathematical works, he wrote on the smaller astrolabe, the instrument then used to measure the stars' places, and on the rise of the Nile, a subject always of interest to the mathematicians of Egypt, from its importance to the husbandman. From Theon's astronomical observations we learn that the Alexandrian astronomers still made use of the old Egyptian movable year of three hundred and sixty-five days only, and without a leap-year. Paul the Alexandrian astrologer, on the other hand, uses the Julian year of three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter, and he dates from the era of Diocletian. We can make no use of his rules for calculating nativities; but his rules for telling the day of the week from the day of the month, and Suidas.

for telling on what day of the week each year began, teach us that our present mode of dividing time was used in Egypt. In the same way we do not care to be told by the astrologer what god watches over each part of a man's body; but from the names of the gods of each day we learn that we owe to the Egyptians the present names for the days of the week.

Lib. ii. 82. Herodotus had hinted that in Egypt each day was named after the god to whom it was dedicated. Dion Cassius had added that they used a week of seven days,

Lib. 37. each named after one of the planets, and that the Jewish Sabbath was the day of Seb or Saturn. But Paul completes our information; and from the three we learn that the Egyptians had, time out of mind, employed the week, and that the names for the days now used in every

A.D. 378. Christian nation are only translations of those given by the Egyptian priests. Paul wrote in the ninety-fourth year of the era of Diocletian.

(11) Horapollo, the grammarian, was also then a teacher

Suidas. in the schools of Alexandria, though after a short time he removed to Constantinople. He wrote in the Coptic language a work in explanation of the hieroglyphics, which has gained a notice far beyond what it deserves, because it is the only work on the subject that has come down to us. It is perhaps hardly fair to judge it by the Greek translation made by an unknown writer of the name of Philip, but it is a work of very little value. Before hieroglyphics were understood, nobody hoped to understand them by its help, and the reader saw at a glance that little could be learnt from it; though we now look to it with some curiosity, to see the sparklings of truth which glimmer through the blunders.

(12) The closing of the catechetical school naturally

Philippus Sidetes, ap. Dodwell. followed upon the persecution with which this reign began. Rhodon, who had succeeded the blind Didymus, was the last of thirteen professors who for upwards of two hundred years had been ornaments to Alexandria and to their religion. As they were appointed to the office by the bishop, the last two or three had been of the Homoousian opinions; but as their pupils were chiefly Arians, the violence of the quarrel would have ruined the school, even without the help of a persecution. Rhodon

removed with his few remaining pupils to Side in Pamphylia, and henceforth the only school of philosophy in Alexandria was that of the pagans. Thus we see that the school of Clemens, Origen, Heraclas, and Dionysius had no lasting weight in guiding the opinions of the Egyptian church. The ignorant superstition of the monks of the Thebaid and Mount Nitria was more persuasive among the Coptic Christians than the learning of the Alexandrian professors.

(13) The only Christian writings of this time, that we know of, are the Paschal letters of Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, written to the Egyptian clergy, to fix the time of Easter. They were much praised by Jerome, and by him translated into Latin. They are full of bitter reproaches against Origen and his writings, and they charge him with having treated Jesus more cruelly than Pilate or the Jews had done. John, the famous monk of the Thebaid, was no writer, though believed to have the gift of prophecy. He was said to have foretold the victory of Theodosius over the rebel Maximus; and, when the emperor had got together his troops to march against Eugenius, another rebel who had seized the passes of the Julian Alps, he sent his trusty eunuch Eutropius to fetch the holy Egyptian, or at least to learn from him what would be the event of the war. John refused to go to Europe, but he told the messenger that Theodosius would conquer the rebel, and soon afterwards die; both of which came to pass, as might easily have been guessed.

Hieronymus, ad Theoph.

Epistola ap. Hieronym.

Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

(14) On the death of Theodosius, the Roman empire was again divided. ARCADIUS, his elder son, ruled Egypt and the East, while Honorius, the younger, held the West; and the reins of government at once passed from the ablest to the weakest hands. But the change was little felt in Egypt, which continued to be governed by the patriarch Theophilus, without the name but with very nearly the power of a prefect. He was a bold and wicked man, but as his religious opinions were for the Homoousians against the Arians, and his political feelings were for the Egyptians against the Greeks, he rallied round his government the chief strength of the province. As the

A.D. 394.

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vi.

pagans and Arians of Alexandria were no longer worthy of his enmity, he fanned into a flame a new quarrel which was then breaking out in the Egyptian church. The monks of Upper Egypt, who were mostly ignorant and unlettered men, were anthropomorphites, or believers that God was in outward shape like a man. They quoted from the Jewish Scriptures that he made man in his own image, in support of their unworthy opinion of the Creator, rather than as an encouragement to their own efforts, and a proof of the noble powers that he has entrusted to his creatures. They held that he was of a strictly human form, like Jesus, which to them seemed fully asserted in the Nicene Creed. In this opinion they were opposed by those who were better educated, and more particularly by Dioscorus, bishop of Hermopolis, with his three brothers, Ammonius, Eusebius, and Euthymius, who were at the head of the monasteries at Scetis. It suited the policy of the violent Theophilus to side with the more ignorant and larger party, and he warmly espoused the anthropomorphite opinion, and branded with the name of Origenists those who argued that God was without form, and who quoted the writings of Origen in support of their opinion. This naturally led to a dispute about Origen's orthodoxy; and that admirable writer, who had been praised by all parties for two hundred years, who had been quoted as authority as much by Athanasius as by the Arians, was declared to be a heretic by a council of bishops who then met in Cyprus. Every council of bishops, wherever held, and indeed every bishop, was then supposed to have authority over all Christendom; and Theophilus, distrusting his own clergy, persuaded Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, to call his council, and get the writings of Origen condemned, as he feared he should not have been able to persuade an Alexandrian council to do so. The writings of Origen were accordingly forbidden to be read, because they contradicted the anthropomorphite opinions.

Theophili Epist. ap. Hieronym.

(15) The quarrel between the Origenists and the anthropomorphites did not end in words. A proposition in theology, or a doubt in metaphysics, was no better cause of civil war than the old quarrels about the bull Apis or the crocodile; but a change of religion

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiii.

had not changed the national character. The patriarch, finding his party the stronger, attacked the enemy in their own monasteries; he marched to Mount Nitria at the head of a strong body of soldiers, and, enrolling under his banners the anthropomorphite monks, attacked Dioscorus and the Origenists, set fire to their monasteries, and laid waste the place.

(16) Theophilus next quarrelled with Peter, the chief of the Alexandrian presbyters, whom he accused of admitting to the sacraments of the church a woman who had not renounced the Manichæan heresy; and he then quarrelled with Isidorus, who had the charge of the poor of the church, because he bore witness to Peter's having had the orders of Theophilus himself for what he did.

(17) The further we advance in the history of Christianity in Egypt, by every step that we leave the bright ages of Origen, Clemens, and the catechetical school, the thicker are the mists of superstition that surround us. In this century there was a general digging up of the bodies of the most celebrated Christians of former ages, to heal the diseases and strengthen the faith of the living; and Constantinople, which as the capital of the empire had been ornamented by the spoils of its subject provinces, had latterly been enriching its churches with the remains of numerous Christian saints. The tombs of Egypt, crowded with mummies that had lain there for centuries, could of course furnish relics more easily than most countries, and in this reign Constantinople received from Alexandria a quantity of bones which were supposed to be those of the martyrs slain in the pagan persecutions. The Archbishop John Chrysostome received them gratefully, and, though himself smarting under the reproach that he was not orthodox according to the measure of the superstitious Egyptians, he thanks God that Egypt, which sent forth its corn to feed its hungry neighbours, could also send the bodies of so many martyrs to sanctify their churches. Homil. in Martyr. Ægypt.

(18) Another superstition, which by this time the pagans had engrafted on Christianity, was that of having sacred trees. Though the Egyptian Christians had no sacred animals, yet they had made a tree called the *Persea* sacred to Jesus. There was a *Persea*, or peach- Cedrenus.

tree, at Hermopolis which was said to heal the diseases of all who touched it. They also had a tradition that when the infant Jesus had been brought into Egypt by his parents he had rested under the shade of a *Persea*, and that the tree, foreseeing his after greatness, had bowed down to worship the child. As this tree was not now to be found, it was one of the crimes laid to the charge of Julian, the apostate emperor, that he had destroyed it, as a step towards out-rooting Christianity. As the peach-groves went to decay their destruction was attributed to the malice of the pagans; and to stop this crime Arcadius made a law that no *Persea* should be cut down in Egypt, and that whoever should be guilty of buying or selling one should forfeit five pounds weight of gold. But the law did not save these trees, which were of foreign growth and only raised by skilful cultivation. The plant has long since been lost to Egypt, and botanists believe that they have met with it in the Date of the desert, the *Balanites Ægyptiaca*, a fruit-tree not uncommon to the south of Meroë. But other naturalists, inquiring into these superstitions, point out the origin of this story in a sensitive plant of the genus *Mimosa*, whose branches droop when touched by the traveller, and seem to salute those who rest under its shade. This mute hospitality has so endeared the tree to the Arabs, that injuring or cutting it down is still strictly forbidden.

Justinian, Cod. xi. 77.

Caillaud, Voyage en Meroë.

Niebuhr's Travels, ch. 142.

(19) We have traced the fall of the Greek party in Alexandria, in the victories over the Arians during the religious quarrels of the last hundred years; and in the laws we now read the city's loss of wealth and power. The corporation of Alexandria was no longer able to bear the expense of cleansing the river and keeping open the canals; and four hundred *solidi*, perhaps about two hundred and forty pounds sterling, were each year set apart from the custom-house duties of the city for that useful work.

Codex Theodos. xiv. 7, 2.

(20) At a time when Italy had very little literature to boast of and very little credit to spare, it seems hard to claim any of it for Egypt; but Claudian, the last of the Roman poets, was a native of Alexandria. He at first wrote in Greek, though a few epigrams are all that now remain in

his native language. It is to his Latin poems, written after he had removed to Rome, that he owes his name and rank as an author. He is one of the few who have been successful as a poet in a foreign language; and though we cannot place him in the first class, with Lucretius, Virgil, and Ovid, he may safely be placed in the second, with Lucan and Statius.

(21) The arrival of new settlers in Alexandria had been very much checked by the less prosperous state of the country since the reign of Diocletian. We still, however, find that many of the men of note were not born in Egypt. Paulus the physician was a native of Ægina. He has left a work on diseases and their remedies. The chief man of learning was Synesius, a Platonic philosopher, whom the Patriarch Theophilus persuaded to join the Christians. As a Platonist he naturally leaned towards many of the doctrines of the popular religion, but he could not believe in a resurrection; and it was not till after Theophilus had ordained him bishop of Ptolemais near Cyrene that he acknowledged the truth of that doctrine. Nor would he then put away or disown his wife, as the custom of the church required; indeed he accepted the bishopric very unwillingly He was as fond of playful sport as he was of books, and very much disliked business. He has left a volume of writings, including letters and some hymns. His thoughts are not unworthy of a Christian philosopher, though his theology was drawn rather from pagan than from Christian streams; for he believed in as many inferior gods as the most ignorant polytheist or the most imaginative Platonist. When young he had studied mathematics and physics under Hypatia, the daughter of Theon, who was then teaching in Alexandria; and to her he addresses several of his letters on matters of science; and he employs her to get made for him in Alexandria instruments which were beyond the skill of the makers in Cyrene. His grateful praises have saved the names of two prefects of Cyrene; the one Anysius, under whose good discipline even the barbarians of Hungary behaved like Roman legionaries, and the other Pæonius, who cultivated science in this barren spot. To encourage Pæonius in his praiseworthy studies, he made him a present of an astrolabe, to measure the distances of the

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiv.

Photius, cod. xxvi.

Epist. 105.

Synesius, Epistolæ.

stars and planets, an instrument which he had had made under the guidance of Hypatia. He laments in terms of great feeling over the fallen state of Cyrene, ruined by the Marcomanni and other barbarian mercenaries that were brought into the province to guard it; and he points with generous shame to the public decrees, carved on a marble monument in the forum, which still declared that the people were Dorians, descended from the Heraclidæ.

Synesius, Catastasis.

(22) Trade and industry were checked by the unsettled state of the country, and misery and famine were spreading over the land. The African tribes of Mazices and Auxoriani, leaving the desert in hope of plunder, overran the province of Libya, and laid waste a large part of the Delta. The barbarians and the sands of the desert were alike encroaching on the cultivated fields. Nature seemed changed. The valley of the Nile was growing narrower. Even within the valley the retreating waters left behind them harvests less rich, and fever more putrid. The quarries were no longer worth working for their building stone. The mines yielded no more gold. Melancholy indeed was the view of the country to a kind-hearted man like Synesius; and in his first hymn he beautifully prays,

Philostorgius, Eccl. Hist. xi. 8.

> Wealth I only ask from heaven,
> Enough to keep chill want and famine
> From the cottage of my neighbour;
> Lest wanting means to help the needy
> Gloomy thoughts might overcome me.

(23) On the death of Arcadius, his son THEODOSIUS was only eight years old, but he was quietly acknowledged as emperor of the East, and he left the government of Egypt, as heretofore, very much in the hands of the patriarch. In the fifth year of his reign Theophilus died; and, as might be supposed, a successor was not appointed without a struggle for the double honour of bishop of Alexandria and governor of Egypt. The remains of the Greek and Arian party proposed Timotheus, an archdeacon in the church; but the Egyptian party were united in favour of Cyril, a young man of learning and talent, who had the advantage of being the nephew of the late bishop. Whatever were the forms by which the election should have

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. A.D. 408.

been governed, it was in reality settled by a battle between the two parties in the streets; and though Abundantius the military prefect gave the weight of his name, if not the strength of his cohort, to the party of Timotheus, yet his rival conquered, and Cyril was carried into the cathedral with a pomp more like a pagan triumph than the modest ordination of a bishop.

(24) Cyril was not less tyrannical in his bishopric than his uncle had been before him. His first care was to put a stop to all heresy in Alexandria, and his second to banish the Jews. The theatre was the spot in which the riots between Jews and Christians usually began, and the Sabbath was the time, as being the day on which the Jews chiefly crowded in to see the dancing. On one occasion the quarrel in the theatre ran so high that the prefect with his cohort was scarcely able to keep them from blows; and the Christians reproached the poor Jews with plotting to burn down the churches. But the Christians were themselves guilty of the very crimes of which they accused their enemies. The next morning, as soon as it was light, Cyril headed the mob in their attacks upon the Jewish synagogues; they broke them open and plundered them, and in one day drove every Jew out of the city. No Jew had been allowed to live in Alexandria or any other city without paying a poll-tax, for leave to worship God according to the manner of his forefathers; but religious zeal is stronger than the love of money; the Jews were driven out, and the tax lost to the city.

Eutychii Annales. Tertullian. Apol. xviii.

(25) Orestes, the prefect of Alexandria, had before wished to check the power of the bishop; and he in vain tried to save the Jews from oppression, and the state from the loss of so many good citizens. But it was useless to quarrel with the patriarch, who was supported by the religious zeal of the whole population. The monks of Mount Nitria and of the neighbourhood burned with a holy zeal to fight for Cyril, as they had before fought for Theophilus; and when they heard that a jealousy had sprung up between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, more than five hundred of them marched into Alexandria to avenge the affronted bishop. They met the prefect Orestes as he was passing through the streets in his open chariot, and began

Socrates, Eccl. Hist. lib. vii.

reproaching him with being a pagan and a Greek. Orestes answered that he was a Christian, and had been baptized at Constantinople. But this only cleared him of the lesser charge, he was certainly a Greek; and one of these Egyptian monks taking up a stone threw it at his head, and the blow covered his face with blood. They then fled from the guards and people who came up to help the wounded prefect; but Ammonius, who threw the stone, was taken and put to death with torture. The grateful bishop buried him in the church with much pomp; he declared him to be a martyr and a saint, and gave him the name of Saint Thaumasius. But the Christians were ashamed of the new martyr; and the bishop, who could not withstand the ridicule, soon afterwards withdrew from him the title.

(26) Bad as was this behaviour of the bishop and his friends, the most disgraceful tale still remains to be told. The beautiful and learned Hypatia, the daughter of Theon the mathematician, was at that time the ornament of Alexandria and the pride of the pagans. She taught philosophy publicly in the Platonic school which had been founded by Ammonius, and which boasted of Plotinus as its pupil. She was as modest as she was graceful, eloquent, and learned; and though, being a pagan, she belonged to neither of the rival Christian parties, yet, as she had more hearers among the Greek friends of the prefect than among the ignorant followers of the bishop, she became an object of jealousy with the Homoousian party. A body of these Christians, says the orthodox historian, attacked this admirable woman in the street; they dragged her from her chariot, and hurried her off into the church named Cæsar's temple, and there stripped her and murdered her with some broken tiles. She had written commentaries on the mathematical works of Diophantus, and on the conic sections of Apollonius.

Suidas.

(27) Arianism took refuge from the Egyptians within the camps of the Greek soldiers. One church was dedicated to the honour of St. George, the late bishop, within the lofty towers of the citadel of Babylon, which was the strongest fortress in Egypt; and a second in the city of Ptolemais, where a garrison was stationed to collect the toll of the Thebaid, and where the modern village, the remains of the

city, yet bears his name and is called by the Arabs, Geergeh. St. George became a favourite saint with the Greeks in Egypt; and in those spots where the Greek soldiers were masters of the churches this Arian and unpopular bishop was often painted on the walls riding triumphantly on horseback and slaying the dragon of Athanasian error. How St. George became the patron saint of England is unknown, but the most probable guess is that it was by a simple confusion of names that he was allowed to usurp the place of St. Gregory, who had so large a share in converting our island to Christianity. The names Ge-org-ius and Gre-gor-ius differ by little more than a single letter. On the other hand, in Alexandria, where his rival's politics and opinions held the upper hand, the monastery of St. Athanasius was built in the most public spot in the city, probably that formerly held by the Sema or royal burial-place; and in Thebes a cathedral church was dedicated to St. Athanasius within the great courtyard of Medinet Abou, where the small and paltry Greek columns are in strange contrast to the grand architecture of Rameses III. which surrounds them (see Fig. 125). It is in these Christian buildings that we for the first time observe a change in the architecture brought about by the use of foreign timber. There are holes in the wall round the courtyard at Medinet Abou, which show that the new colonnade which surrounded it was to be roofed with the help of beams, covered perhaps with matting. The old temples were all roofed with stone.

(28) In former reigns the Alexandrians had been in the habit of sending embassies to Constantinople to complain of tyranny or misgovernment, and to beg for a redress of grievances, when they thought that justice could be there obtained when it was refused in Alexandria. But this practice was stopped by Theodosius, who made a law that the Alexandrians should never send an embassy to Constantinople, unless it were agreed to by a decree of the town council, and had the approbation of the prefect. The weak and idle emperor would allow no appeal from the tyranny of his own governor.

Justinian, Cod. x. 63.

(29) We may pass over the banishment of John Chrysostome, bishop of Constantinople, as having less to do with the history of Egypt, though, as in the cases of Arius and

Nestorius, the chief mover of the attack upon him was a bishop of Alexandria, who accused him of heresy, because he did not come up to the Egyptian standard of orthodoxy.

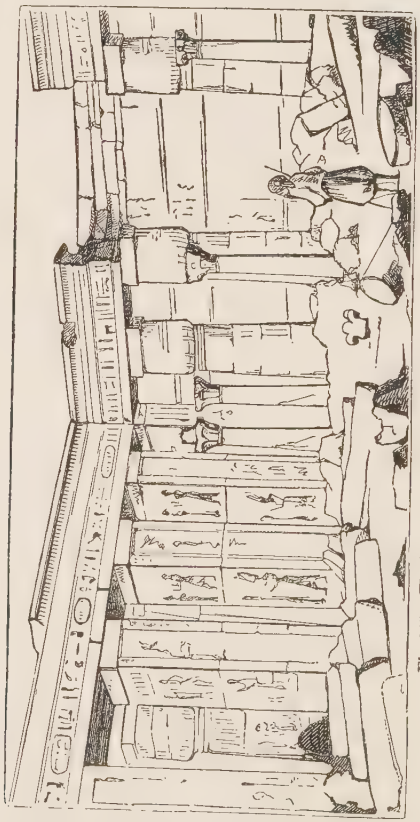


Fig. 125.—The Temple of Medinet Abou, with the Christian additions.

But among the bishops who were deposed with Chrysostome was Palladius of Galatia, who was sent a prisoner to Syene. As soon as he was released from his bonds, instead of being cast down by his misfortunes, he proposed to take advantage of the place of his banishment,

Palladius, Vit. Chrysost.

and he set forward on his travels through Ethiopia for India, in search of the wisdom of the Brahmins. He arrived in safety at Adule, the port on the Red Sea in latitude 15°, where he made acquaintance with Moses the bishop of that city, and persuaded him to join him in his distant and difficult voyage. From Adule they set sail in one of the vessels employed in the Indian trade; but they were unable to accomplish their purpose, and Palladius returned to Egypt worn out with heat and fatigue, having scarcely touched the shores of India. On his return through Thebes he met with a traveller, who had lately returned from the same journey, and who consoled him under his disappointment by recounting his own failure in the same undertaking. His new friend had himself been a merchant in the Indian trade, but had given up business because he was not successful in it; and, having taken a priest as his companion, had set out on the same voyage in search of Eastern wisdom. They had sailed to Adule on the Abyssinian shore, and then travelled to Auxum, the capital of that country. From that coast they set sail for the Indian Ocean, and reached a coast which they thought was Taprobane or Ceylon. But there they were taken prisoners, and, after spending six years in slavery, and learning but little of the philosophy that they were in search of, were glad to take the first opportunity of escaping and returning to Egypt. Palladius had travelled in Egypt before he was sent there into banishment, and he had spent many years in examining the monasteries of the Thebaid and their rules, and he has left a history of the lives of many of those holy men and women, addressed to his friend Lausus.

De Bragmanibus.

Hist. Lausiaca.

(30) When Nestorius was deposed from the bishopric of Constantinople by the council of Ephesus, for refusing to use the words "Mother of God" as the title of Jesus's mother, and for falling short in other points of what was then thought orthodoxy, he was banished to Hibe in the Great Oasis, where, if we may judge from the tombs and other sacred buildings, there must have lately been a prosperous Christian population (see Fig. 126). The world thought it necessary to check heresy by force, and the civil magistrate chose banishment as the most suitable punishment

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. A.D. 431.

Hoskins's Oasis.

for men whom the state might fear without blaming. But its severity was often increased by religious zeal; and Egypt was cruelly chosen as the place of banishment for Nestorius, because he was there shunned as a heretic by the whole of the people. While he was living there, the Great Oasis was overrun by the Blemmyes, the Roman garrison was defeated, and those that resisted were put to the sword. The Blemmyes pillaged the place and then withdrew; and, being themselves at war with the Mazices, another tribe of Arabs, they kindly sent their prisoners to the Thebaid, lest they should fall into the hands of the latter. Nestorius then went to the Panopolis to show himself to the governor, lest he should be accused of running away from his place of banishment, and soon afterwards he died of the sufferings brought on by these forced and painful journeys through the desert.

Fig. 126.

(31) About the same time Egypt was visited by Cassianus, a monk of Gaul, in order to study the monastic institutions of the Thebaid. In his work on that subject he has described at length the way of life and the severe rules of the Egyptian monks, and has recommended them to the imitation of his countrymen. But the natives of Italy and the West do not seem to have been contented with copying the Theban monks at a distance. Such was the fame of the Egyptian monasteries that many zealots from Italy flocked there, to place themselves under the severe discipline of those holy men. As these Latin monks did not understand either Coptic or Greek, they found some difficulty in regulating their lives with the wished-for exactness: and the rules of Pachomius, of Theodorus, and of Oresiesis, the most

Eusebii Chronicon.

Hieronymus in Pachomii Regulam. Epist. cviii.

celebrated of the founders, were actually sent to Jerome at Rome, to be by him translated into Latin for the use of these settlers in the Thebaid. These Latin monks made St. Peter a popular saint in some parts of Egypt; and in the temple of Asseboua in Nubia, when the Christians plastered over the figure of one of the old gods, they painted in its place the Apostle Peter holding the key in his hand. They did not alter the rest of the sculpture; so that Rameses II. is there now seen presenting his offering to the Christian saint (see Fig. 127). The mixed group gives us proof of the nation's decline in art rather than of its improvement in religion.

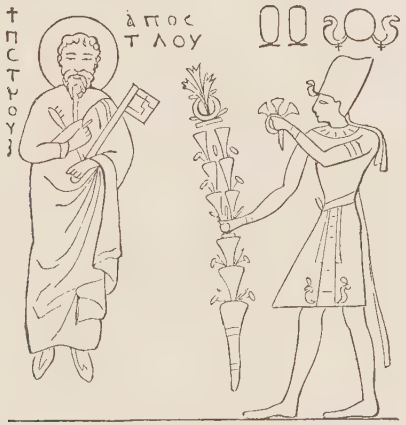


Fig. 127.

(32) Among the monks of Egypt there were also some men of learning and industry, who in their cells in the desert were working for the benefit of their fellow-Christians and posterity. They had made at least three translations of the New Testament into the three dialects of the Coptic language; namely, the Sahidic of Upper Egypt, the Bashmuric of the Bashmour province of the eastern half of the Delta, and the Coptic proper of Memphis and the western half of the Delta. To these were afterwards added the Acts of the council of Nicæa, the lives of the saints and martyrs, the

writings of many of the Christian Fathers, the rituals of the Coptic church, and various treatises on religion. Among the more curious of these Coptic writings is the Pistis-Sophia, a volume which contains, but fails to explain, some of the mystic dreamy opinions of the Gnostic Christians. Pistis-Sophia, or *Religious Wisdom*, is an attribute of the Almighty which becomes one of the angelic beings called Æons, and her teachings are conveyed to mankind by God's Word. Hence the book, which is built upon the narrative of the Gospels, contains supposed conversations of Jesus with his disciples, in which he relates the penitential hymns and sayings of Pistis-Sophia, and allows his mother, his apostles, and his more intimate friends to explain them to the world. The writer rejects the miraculous birth of Jesus as related in the first Gospel, and also the opinion that the divine Spirit entered into him for the first time after his baptism by John; and he puts forward a middle view, namely, that when Jesus was a child, old enough to run with his father Joseph in the vineyard, the Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a child of like age with himself, and the two children embraced one another and became one, and that thus the divine nature was lodged in a human body.

(33) Other monks were as busy in making copies of the Greek manuscripts of the Old and New Testament; and, as each copy must have needed the painful labour of months, and almost years, their industry and zeal must have been great. Most of these manuscripts were on papyrus, or on a manufactured papyrus which might be called paper, and have long since been lost; but the most ancient copies on parchment which are the pride of the Vatican, the Paris library, of St. Petersburg, and the British Museum, are the work of the Alexandrian penmen. These of Paris and the Vatican are perhaps the oldest, but the well-known Alexandrian manuscript in the British Museum was most likely written about this time. It was sent to Charles I. of England by a patriarch of Constantinople, who said that he had it from Egypt, and that there had once been a superscription on it saying that it was written by Thecla, an Egyptian lady of high rank, soon after the council of Nicæa. It is written in capitals, without accents or spaces between the words: it contains, beside the Old and New

Baber's Prolegom.

Testaments, the epistles of Clemens Romanus, and an epistle of Athanasius about the Psalms, with a list of those which are to be used in prayer for each hour of the day and night, and fourteen hymns, one of which is in praise of Mary, as 'the Mother of God." These circumstances, together with the style of the handwriting, seem to fix the date of this valuable manuscript to about this time; and, on comparing it with the older edition of the New Testament quoted by the Alexandrian fathers, and now shown in the Vatican manuscripts, we trace in many readings of the London manuscript the growing disposition of theologians to deny the humanity of Jesus. Copies of the Bible were also made in Alexandria for sale in Western Europe; and all our oldest manuscripts show their origin by the Egyptian form of spelling in some of the words. The Beza manuscript at Cambridge (see Fig. 99) and the Clermont manuscript at Paris, which have Greek on one side of the page and Latin on the other, were written in Alexandria. The Latin is that more ancient version which was in use before the time of Jerome, and which he corrected, to form what is now called the Latin Vulgate. This old version was made by changing each Greek word into its corresponding Latin word, with very little regard to the different characters of the two languages. It was no doubt made by an Alexandrian Greek who had a very slight knowledge of Latin.

(34) Already the papyrus on which books were written was for the most part a manufactured article, and might claim the name of paper. In the time of Pliny in the first century the sheets had been made in the old way; the slips of the plant laid one across the other had been held together by their own sticky sap without the help of glue. In the reign of Aurelian, in the third century, if not earlier, glue had been largely used in the manufacture; and it is probable that at this time, in the fifth century, the manufactured article almost deserved the name of paper. But this manufactured papyrus was much weaker and less lasting than that made after the old and more simple fashion. No books written upon it remain to us. At a later period the stronger fibre of flax was used in the manufacture, but the date of this improvement is also unknown, because at first the paper so made, like that made from the papyrus

Nilus, Epist. ad Philippum.

fibre, was also too weak to last. It was doubtless an Alexandrian improvement. Flax was an Egyptian plant; paper-making was an Egyptian trade; and Theophilus, a Roman writer on manufactures, when speaking of paper made from flax, clearly points to its Alexandrian origin, by giving it the name of Greek Parchment. Between the papyrus of the third century, and the strong paper of the eleventh century, no books remain to us but those written on skins of parchment.

Diversarum Artium Schedula, lib. i. 21.

(35) At this time Moses of Chorene, who was afterwards the historian of Armenia, came to Alexandria with two or three other young Armenians to study the Greek language and to correct the Armenian translation of the Bible. The province of Armenia was now governed by two men who were an honour to their country and their age; Isaac the patriarch, the successor of the great Nerses, and Mesrobes, a learned statesman and scholar. These true patriots wished their nation to use an Armenian alphabet formed on the model of the Greek, but fitted to the sounds in their own language, instead of writing as hitherto sometimes with Persian letters, sometimes with Greek, and sometimes with Syriac. They wished also to have a new Armenian Bible made from what they considered the authentic Alexandrian text, in the place of the old version made from the Hebrew or Syriac, and written in Syriac characters. They accordingly sent Moses and his companions to study in what was then the first school of learning. Though zealous Christians and admirers of Bishop Cyril, yet they were not so bigoted as to wish them to learn Greek from an Egyptian or a monk. The pagans were the only good teachers of language; and the young Armenians therefore joined the school of the New Platonists, of which Syrianus was about that time the head. Under such tutorship Moses studied the Greek historians and elegant literature, and his History of Armenia shows that he made good progress. When the scholars returned home, Armenia for a moment became a seat of learning. They had not limited their studies to the Bible. They had translated into Armenian several writers both Christian and pagan. The Chronicle of Eusebius is best known to us in the Armenian translation; and Europe is even now receiving from the Armenian monks

Hist. Armen. lib. iii. 61.

of St. Lazarus in Venice some of the learning which Moses and his companions had gained in Alexandria. But some of the Armenian writings have performed a service and met with a fate that was little to be foreseen. They were often written upon old parchment, and thus they covered up more ancient writings, which were only half defaced. And as we remove the sand of the desert to study the sculptures which have been so long hidden beneath it, so we also clear away the Armenian writing to read upon the twice-used parchment portions of the Holy Scriptures in the oldest of our manuscripts.

Tischendorf, Sacra Palimps.

(36) The Christian writings of this reign are neither many nor valuable. Isodorus of Pelusium has left a large volume of letters, addressed to friends and enemies on theological and religious subjects. But they seem to have been written for publication rather than to be sent to the persons to whom they were addressed. At this time, perhaps, we ought to place Nonnus of the city of Panopolis, the author of a poetical paraphrase of St. John's Gospel, and of the Dionysiaca, a tame and feeble history of the deeds of Bacchus, in heroic verse. Cyril the patriarch of Alexandria has left several writings, but of little worth either for style or argument. They are homilies, commentaries on the Bible, and treatises against Nestorius, against the Emperor Julian, and against the anthropomorphite monks.

(37) The monks of Mount Sinai suffered much during these reigns of weakness from the marauding attacks of the Arabs. These men had no strong monastery; but hundreds of them lived apart in single cells in the side of the mountains round the valley of Feiran at the foot of Mount Serbal, and they had nothing to protect them but their poverty. They were not protected by Egypt, and they made treaties with the neighbouring Arabs, like an independent republic, of which the town of Feiran was the capital. The Arabs, from the Jordan to the Red Sea, made robbery the employment of their lives, and they added much to the voluntary sufferings of the monks. Nilus, a monk who had left his family in Egypt to spend his life in prayer and study on the spot where Moses was appointed the legislator of Israel, describes these attacks upon his brethren, and he boasts over the Israelites that, notwithstanding their

Nili Monach. Narratio.

sufferings, the monks spent their whole lives cheerfully in those very deserts which God's chosen people could not even pass through without murmuring. Nilus has left some letters and exhortations. At that time probably some of the later inscriptions were made which can yet be seen on the rocks at the foot of Mount Serbal and on the path towards its sacred peak. Those which were cut in the earliest centuries of the Jewish pilgrimages from Egypt may have been long since cleared away by the wind and rain; but they gave to the mountain its name of Mount Sephar, or the *written mountain*, now changed to Serbal; while these newer inscriptions may have given to the valley on the road to it its newer name of Wady Mokatteb, which has the same meaning in Arabic as the former has in Hebrew. Some few of these inscriptions are Greek, and in them the purport is that the person named ought to be remembered. But the larger number are in a rude Hebrew character which cannot be wholly read.

Genesis x. 30.

Numbers xxxiii. 23.

They reach over at least ten centuries. The earliest may have been cut by Jews who fled before the Assyrians in Hezekiah's reign; others may be of the time of the Babylonian Captivity. Some contain votive prayers for their unhappy countrymen, when suffering under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes; and some, thanks for their relief when the Maccabee revolt was successful. A few are by Christian Jews, and a few by Gnostic Jews. But the larger number simply let us know that the writers have reached the Holy Mountain from Lower Egypt, and have recorded on the rock their prayer for the ruined Jerusalem.

(38) The Egyptian physicians had of old always formed a part of the priesthood, and they seem to have done nearly the same after the spread of Christianity. We find an order of monks named *Parabalani*, who owned the bishop of Alexandria as their head, and who united the offices of physician and nurse in waiting on the sick and dying. As they professed poverty, they were maintained by the state and had other privileges; and hence it was a place much sought after, and even by the wealthy. But to lessen this abuse it was ordered by an imperial

Codex Theodos. xvi. 2, 42.

rescript that none but poor people who had been rate-payers should be *Parabalani;* and their number was limited, first to five hundred, but afterwards, at the request of the bishop, to six hundred. A second charitable institution in Alexandria had the care of strangers and the poor, and was also managed by one of the priests. Sozomen, Eccl. Hist. lib. viii.

(39) Alexandria was fast sinking in wealth and population, and several new laws were now made to lessen its difficulties. One was to add a hundred and ten bushels of corn to the daily alimony of the city, the supply on which the riotous citizens were fed in idleness. By a second and a third law the five chief men in the corporation, and every man that had filled a civic office for thirty years, were freed from all bodily punishment, and only to be fined when convicted of a crime. Theodosius built a large church in Alexandria, which was called after his name; and the provincial judges were told in a letter to the prefect, that if they wished to earn the emperor's praise they must not only restore those buildings which were falling through age and neglect, but must also build new ones. Codex Theodos. xiv. 26, 2. xii. 1, 190. xii. 1, 191. J. Malala, lib. xiv. Codex Theodos. xv. 1, 20.

(40) Though the pagan philosophy had been much discouraged at Alexandria by the destruction of the temples and the stop put to the sacrifices, yet the philosophers were still allowed to teach in the schools. This was the age of commentators, when scholars hardly ventured to cultivate their own thoughts, but spent their time in explaining the thoughts of others. To understand Aristotle or Plato was supposed to be the utmost height that human genius could reach to, and to explain their opinions to others the most useful employment of a scholar. The verbal critics of the Museum under the Ptolemies, the followers of Aristarchus, in their notes upon Homer, were not employed upon any very lofty task; but it was by no means so cramping to the mind as the new employment which had taken its place. The scholars now searched for truth not in nature but in books; they were agreed that all knowledge was to be found in either Aristotle or Plato, and they only disagreed as to which was the real fountain of wisdom. Syrianus was at the head of the Platonists, and he wrote largely on the Orphic, Suidas.

Pythagorean, and Platonic doctrines; but so little does the world now value these studies that the works of Syrianus still remain in manuscript, and are therefore unread. We know him only in a Latin translation of his Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics, in which he aims at showing how a Pythagorean or a Platonist would successfully answer Aristotle's objections. He seems to look upon the writings of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus as the true fountains of Platonic wisdom, quite as much as the works of the great philosopher who gave his name to the sect. Syrianus afterwards removed to Athens, to take charge of the Platonic school in that city, and henceforth Athens rather than Alexandria became the chief seat of Alexandrian Platonism.

(41) Olympiodorus was at the same time undertaking the task of forming a Peripatetic school in Alexandria, in opposition to the New Platonism, and he has left some of the fruits of his labour in his Commentaries on Aristotle. But the Peripatetic philosophy was no longer attractive to the pagans, though since the fall of the catechetical school it had been a good deal followed by the Christians. Olympiodorus also wrote a history, but it was in a stiff inelegant style, and has long since been lost, with other works of a second-rate merit. He was a native of the Thebaid, and travelled over his country. He described the Great Oasis as still a highly cultivated spot, where the husbandman watered his fields every third day in summer, and every fifth day in winter, from wells of two and three hundred feet in depth, and thereby raised two crops of barley, and often three of millet, in a year. One of the buildings at Doosh, in the Great Oasis, which seems to be of this age, and is wholly of brick, gives us an instance of a pointed Gothic arch. Olympiodorus also travelled beyond Syene into Nubia, with some danger from the Blemmyes, but he was not able to see the emerald mines, which were worked on Mount Smaragdus in the Arabian desert between Coptos and Berenice, and which seem to have been the chief object of his journey. His writings on the Sacred Art of Alchemy still remain in manuscript and unprinted in the Library at Paris.

Suidas. Marinus, Vit. Procli.

Photius, cod. lxxx.

Hoskins's Oasis.

(42) Proclus came to Alexandria about the end of this

reign, and studied many years under Olympiodorus, but not to the neglect of the Platonic philosophy, of which he afterwards became such a distinguished ornament and support. The other Alexandrians under whom Proclus studied were Hero the mathematician, a devout and religious pagan, Leonas the rhetorician, who introduced him to all the chief men of learning, and Orion the grammarian, who boasted of his descent from the race of Theban priests. He also attended the lectures at the Roman college and made himself master of the Latin language. But Proclus removed to Athens, where Christianity pressed less severely upon the philosophers than it did in Alexandria, and where, under Syrianus, the Alexandrian Platonism now flourished more vigorously than in its native city. At Athens he wrote his mathematical and philosophical works, in the latter of which Platonism appears even further removed from the opinions of its great author than it had been in the writings of Plotinus.

Marinus, Vit. Procli.

(43) Besides these great pagan writers, we may mention Pampretius the Alexandrian critic, who removed to Athens at the same time with Proclus. Orion the grammarian, who had the honour of having Proclus for his pupil, was a native of Thebes, and the author of a small work on etymology which has escaped the accidents of fourteen centuries, when more valuable writings have perished. He afterwards removed to Cæsarea, where he taught grammar in the schools. Asclepiodotus, who for some time lived at Aphroditopolis, wrote on physics, mathematics, and morals. Thus the pagans still held up their heads in the schools. Nor were the ceremonies of their religion, though unlawful, wholly stopped. In the twenty-eighth year of this reign, when the people were assembled in a theatre at Alexandria to celebrate the midnight festival of the Nile, a sacrifice which had been forbidden by Constantine and the council of Nicæa, the building fell beneath the weight of the crowd, and upwards of five hundred persons were killed by the fall.

Damascius, ap. Photium. Suidas.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

Eusebius, Vit. Constant.

(44) Here it will not be uninteresting to review the machinery of officers and deputies, civil as well as military, by which Egypt was governed under the successors of Constantine. The whole of the eastern

Notitia Dign. Imp.

empire was placed under two prefects, the pretorian prefect of the East and the pretorian prefect of Illyricum, who, living at Constantinople, like modern secretaries of state, made edicts for the government of the provinces and heard the appeals. Under the prefect of the East were fifteen consular provinces, together with Egypt, which latter was no longer under one prefect. There was no consular governor in Egypt between the prefect at Constantinople and the six prefects of the smaller provinces. These provinces were Upper Libya or Cyrene, Lower Libya or the Oasis, the Thebaid, Ægyptiaca or the western part of the Delta, Augustanica or the eastern part of the Delta, and the Heptanomis, now named Arcadia, after the late emperor. Each of these was under an Augustal prefect, attended by a *Princeps*, a *Cornicularius*, an *Adjutor*, and others; and was assisted in civil matters by a *Commentariensis*, a corresponding secretary, a secretary *ab actis*, with a crowd of *numerarii* or clerks. The military government was under a count with two dukes, with a number of legions, cohorts, troops, and wedges of cavalry, stationed in about fifty cities, which, if they had looked as well in the field as they do upon paper, would have made Theodosius II. as powerful as Augustus. But the number of Greek and Roman troops was small. The rest were barbarians who held their own lives at small price, and the lives of the unhappy Egyptians at still less. The Greeks were only parts of the fifth Macedonian legion, and of Trajan's second legion, which were stationed at Memphis, at Parembole, and at Apollinopolis; while from the names of the other cohorts we learn that they were Franks, Germans, Portuguese, Quadri, Spaniards, Britons, Moors, Vandals, Gauls, Sarmati, Assyrians, Galatians, Africans, Numidians, and others of less known and more remote places. Egypt itself furnished the Egyptian legion, part of which was in Mesopotamia, Diocletian's third legion of Thebans, the first Maximinian legion of Thebans, which was stationed in Thrace, Constantine's second Flavian legion of Thebans, Valens's second Felix legion of Thebans, and the Julian Alexandrian legion, stationed in Thrace. Besides these, there were several bodies of native militia, from Abydos, Syene, and other cities, which were not formed into legions. The Egyptian cavalry were a first and second Egyptian troop,

several bodies of native archers mounted, three troops on dromedaries, and a body of Diocletian's third legion promoted to the cavalry. These Egyptian troops were chiefly Arab settlers in the Thebaid, for the Copts had long since lost the use of arms. The Copts were weak enough to be trampled on; but the Arabs were worth bribing by admission into the legions. The taxes of the province were collected by a number of counts of the sacred largesses, who were under the orders of an officer of the same title at Constantinople, and were helped by a body of counts of the exports and imports, prefects of the treasury and of the mints, with an army of clerks of all titles and all ranks. From this government the Alexandrians were exempt, living under their own military prefect and corporation, and, instead of paying any taxes beyond the custom-house duties at the port, they received a bounty in corn out of the taxes of Egypt.

(45) Soon after this we find the political division of Egypt slightly altered. It is then divided into eight governments; the Upper Thebaid with eleven cities under a duke; the Lower Thebaid with ten cities, including the Great Oasis and part of the Heptanomis, under a general; Upper Libya, or Cyrene, under a general; Lower Libya, or Parætonium, under a general; Arcadia, or the remainder of the Heptanomis, under a general; Ægyptiaca, or the western half of the Delta, under an Augustalian prefect; the first Augustan government, or the rest of the Delta, under a *Corrector;* and the second Augustan government, from Bubastis to the Red Sea, under a general. We also meet with several military stations named after the late emperors; a Maximianopolis and a Diocletianopolis in the Upper Thebaid; a Theodosianopolis in the Lower Thebaid, and a second Theodosianopolis in Arcadia. But it is not easy to determine what villages were meant by these high-sounding names, which were perhaps only used in official documents, and which soon gave way to the old names which they were meant to displace. Hieroclis Synecdemus.

(46) The empire of the East was gradually sinking in power during this long and quiet reign of Theodosius II.; but the empire of the West was being hurried to its fall by the revolt of the barbarians in every one of its wide-spread provinces, in Germany, in Gaul, in Britain, in Spain, and on

the coast of Africa. Two great invasions completed the ruin of Italy. The first was that of the Goths of Dalmatia and Mœsia, countries to the south of the Danube, between the Adriatic and Constantinople, who at the beginning of this reign under their King Alaric overran Italy and pillaged Rome. The second was that of the Huns of Dacia, the country to the north of the Danube, the modern Hungary, who conquered the north of Italy two years after the death of Theodosius. The advance of the Huns upon Rome was first delayed by a ransom, and then stopped by the death of their King Attila. But no such accident could save the Roman empire from decay. Henceforth in the weakness of the two countries Egypt and Rome are wholly separated. After having influenced one another in politics, in literature, and in religion, for seven centuries, they were now as little known to one another as they were before the day when Fabius arrived at Alexandria on an embassy from the Senate to Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Rameses II. trampling on his enemies.

CHAPTER XX.

THE REIGNS OF MARCIAN, LEO, LEO II., ZENO, BASILICUS, AND ANASTASIUS. A.D. 450—518.

(1) THEOLOGICAL and political quarrels, under the name of the Homoousian and Arian controversy, had nearly separated Egypt from the rest of the empire during the reigns of Constantius and Valens, but they had been healed by the wisdom of the first Theodosius, who governed Egypt by means of a popular bishop; and the policy which he so wisely began was continued by his successors through weakness. But in the reign of MARCIAN the old quarrel again broke out, and though it was under a new name it again took the form of a religious controversy. Cyril the bishop of Alexandria, died in the last reign; and as he had succeeded his uncle, so on his death the bishopric fell to Dioscorus, a relation of his own, a man of equal religious violence and of less learning, who differed from him only in the points of doctrine about which he should quarrel with his fellow-Christians. About the same time Eutyches, a priest of Constantinople, had been condemned by his superiors and expelled from the church for denying the two natures of Christ, and for maintaining that he was truly God, and in no respect a man. This was the opinion of the Egyptian church, and therefore Dioscorus the bishop of Alexandria, who had no right whatever to meddle in the quarrels at Constantinople, yet, acting on the forgotten rule that each bishop's power extended over all Christendom, undertook of his own authority to absolve Eutyches from his excommunication, and in return to excommunicate the bishop of Constantinople who had condemned him. To settle this quarrel, a general council was summoned at Chalcedon; and there six hundred and thirty-two bishops met and condemned the faith of Eutyches, and further explained the Nicene Creed, to which Eutyches and the Egyptians always appealed. They excommunicated Eutyches and his patron Dioscorus, who were

A.D. 450.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xiv.

banished by the emperor; and they elected Proterius to the then vacant bishopric of Alexandria.

(2) In thus condemning the faith of Eutyches, the Greeks were excommunicating the whole of Egypt. The Egyptian belief in the one nature of Christ and the incorruptible nature of his body, which soon afterwards took the name of the Jacobite faith, from one of its popular supporters, might perhaps be distinguished by the microscopic eye of the controversialist from the faith of Eutyches; but they equally fell under the condemnation of the council of Chalcedon. Egypt was no longer divided in its religious opinions. There had been a party who, though Egyptian in blood, held the Arian and half-Arian opinions of the Greeks, but that party had ceased to exist. Their religion had pulled one way and their political feelings another; the latter were found the stronger, as being more closely rooted to the soil; and their religious opinions had by this time fitted themselves to the geographical boundaries of the country. Hence the decrees of the council of Chalcedon were rejected by the whole of Egypt; and the quarrel between the Chalcedonian and Jacobite party, like the former quarrel between the Athanasians and the Arians, was little more than another name for the unwillingness of the Egyptians to be governed by Constantinople.

(3) Proterius the new bishop entered Alexandria supported by the prefect Florus at the head of the troops. But this was the signal for a revolt of the Egyptians, who overpowered the cohort with darts and stones; and the magistrates were driven to save their lives in the celebrated temple of Serapis. But they found no safety there; the mob surrounded the building and set fire to it, and burned alive the Greek magistrates and friends of the new bishop; and the city remained in the power of the rebellious Egyptians. When the news of this rising reached Constantinople the emperor sent to Egypt a further force of two thousand men, who stormed Alexandria and sacked it like a conquered city, and established Proterius in the bishopric. As a punishment upon the city for its rebellion, the prefect stopped for some time the public games and the allowance of corn to the citizens, and only restored them after the return to peace and good order.

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xv.

(4) By this time the less civilised neighbours of Egypt on its southern frontier had discovered its weakness, and were pressing against it for plunder. That Nubia had been quiet between the reigns of Constantine and Theodosius II. is shown by our finding the remains of Christian churches there; but since that time the marauding tribes of the desert had overrun the country to the south of the cataract, and had slaughtered or driven away the few Coptic Christians that once dwelt there. Of their condition, and of the warfare which destroyed them, we learn something from the state of the ruined buildings. It would seem that the Christians of Talmis, now called Calabshe, had built dwellings for

Fig. 129.

themselves on the roof of the great temple, the better to defend themselves against the attacks of their warlike uncivilised neighbours; and the barbarians, as the easiest means of dislodging them from their stronghold, had lighted fires in the temple beneath, large enough to make the scorched roof and the dwellings upon it crumble down into the flames. In order to bring the fire nearer to the roof and to its inhabitants, fuel was placed upon the top of each of the dwarf walls between the columns of the great portico; and the large stones which reach from column to column and uphold that part of the roof still show the marks of the fire (see Fig. 129).

(5) For a time the garrison at Syene was able to check the advance of the barbarians and keep them to the south of the cataract; but latterly the Blemmyes and Nubades, or Nobatæ, had been renewing their inroads upon Upper Egypt; they had overpowered the Romans, as the Greek and barbarian troops of Constantinople were always called, and had carried off a large booty and a number of prisoners. Maximinus the imperial general then led his forces against them; he defeated them, and made them beg for peace. The barbarians proposed, as the terms on their side, to agree never to enter Egypt while Maximinus commanded the troops in the Thebaid; but the conqueror was not contented with such an unsatisfactory submission, and would make no treaty with them till they had released the Roman prisoners without ransom, paid for the booty that they had taken, and given some of their nobles as hostages. On this Maximinus agreed to a truce for a hundred years.

Excerpt. Legat. Byzant.

(6) The people whom we now meet with as Nubians, living on both sides of the cataract of Syene, declared themselves of the true Egyptian race by their religion. They had an old custom of going each year to the temple of Isis on the isle of Elephantine, and of carrying away one of the statues with them and of returning it to the temple when they had consulted it. But as they were now being driven out of the province, they bargained with Maximinus for leave to visit the temple each year without hindrance from the Roman guards; and the treaty was written on papyrus and nailed up in this temple. But friendship in the desert, says the proverb, is as weak and wavering as the shade of the acia-tree; this truce was no sooner agreed upon than Maximinus fell ill and died; and the Nubades at once broke the treaty, regained by force their hostages, who had not yet been carried out of the Thebaid, and overran the province as they had done before their defeat.

(7) By this success of the Nubians, Christianity was very much driven out of Upper Egypt; and about seventy years after the law of Theodosius I., by which paganism was supposed to be crushed, the religion of Isis and Serapis was again openly professed in the Thebaid, where it had perhaps always been cultivated in secret. A certain master of

the robes in one of the Egyptian temples came at this time to the temple of Isis in the island of Philæ, and by his votive inscription there declares that he was the son of Pachomius, a prophet, and successor in a right line from a yet more famous Pachomius, a prophet, who we may easily believe was the Christian prophet who gathered together so many followers in the island of Tabenna, near Thebes, and there founded an order of Christian monks. These Christians now returned to their paganism. Nearly all the remains of Christian architecture which we meet with in the Thebaid were built during the hundred and sixty years between the defeat of the Nubians by Diocletian and their victories in the reign of Marcian. Inscript. ap. Boeckh. 4915.

(8) The Nubians were far more civilised than their neighbours the Blemmyes, whom they were usually able to drive back into their native deserts. We find an inscription in bad Greek, in the great temple at Talmis, now the village of Kalabshee, which was probably written about this time, or perhaps a little later. An unknown conqueror of the name of Silco there declares that he is king of the Nubians and all the Ethiopians; that in the upper part of his kingdom he is called Mars, and in the lower part Lion; that he is as great as any king of his day; that he has defeated the Blemmyes in battle again and again; and that he has made himself master of the country between Talmis and Primis. While such were the neighbours and inhabitants of the Thebaid, the fields were only half-tilled, and the desert was encroaching on the paths of man. The sand was filling up the temples, covering the overthrown statues, and blocking up the doors to the tombs; but it was at the same time saving, to be dug out in after ages, those records which the living no longer valued. Gau, Antiq. de la Nubie.

(9) On the death of the Emperor Marcian, the Alexandrians, taking advantage of the absence of the military prefect Dionysius, who was then fighting against the Nubades in Upper Egypt, renewed their attack upon the Bishop Proterius, and deposed him from his office. To fill his place they made choice of a monk named Timotheus Ælurus, who held the Jacobite faith, and, having among them two deposed bishops, they got them to ordain Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. ii. A.D. 457.

him bishop of Alexandria, and then led him by force of arms into the great church which had formerly been called Cæsar's temple. Upon hearing of the rebellion, the prefect returned in haste to Alexandria; but his approach was only the signal for greater violence, and the enraged people murdered Proterius in the baptistery, and hung up his body at the Tetrapylon, in mockery. This was not a rebellion of the mob. Timotheus was supported by the men of chief rank in the city; the *Honorati*, who had borne state offices; the *Politici*, who had borne civic offices, and the *Navicularii*, or contractors for the freight of the Egyptian tribute, were all opposed to the emperor's claim to appoint the officer whose duties were much more those of prefect of the city than patriarch of Egypt. With such an opposition as this, the emperor would do nothing without the greatest caution, for he was in danger of losing Egypt altogether. But so much were the minds of all men then engrossed in ecclesiastical matters, that this political struggle wholly took the form of a dispute in controversial divinity, and the emperor wrote a letter to the chief bishops in Christendom to ask their advice in his difficulty. These theologians were too busily engaged in their religious controversies to take any notice of the danger of Egypt's revolting from the empire and joining the Persians; so they strongly advised the Emperor LEO not to depart from the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, or to acknowledge as bishop of Alexandria a man who denied the two natures of Christ. Accordingly, the emperor again risked breaking the slender ties by which he held Egypt; he banished the popular bishop, and forced the Alexandrians to receive in his place one who held the Chalcedonian faith. The new bishop was named Timotheus Salophaciolus, but was sometimes called Timotheus Basilicus, or the emperor's Timotheus, to distinguish him from the former, who was the Timotheus of the Egyptians.

(10) Even the small province of Libya, which was little more than Parætonium and the surrounding desert, had ventured during these troubles to rebel against the empire; but it was reduced to obedience by an army under the command of the prefect Heraclius.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

(11) On the death of Leo, he was succeeded by his grand-

son LEO THE YOUNGER, who died after a reign of one year, and was succeeded by his father ZENO, the son-in-law of the elder Leo. Zeno gave himself up at once to debauchery and vice, while the empire was harassed on all sides by the barbarians, and the provinces were raised into rebellion by the cruelty of the prefects. The rebels at last found a head in Basilicus, the brother-in-law of Leo. He declared himself of the Jacobite faith, which was the faith of the barbarian enemies, of the barbarian troops, and of the barbarian allies of the empire, and, proclaiming himself emperor, made himself master of Constantinople without a battle, and drove Zeno into banishment in the third year of his reign. Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. A.D. 473. A.D. 474.

(12) The first step of BASILICUS was to recall from banishment Timotheus Ælurus, the late bishop of Alexandria, and to restore him to the bishopric. He then addressed to him and the other recalled bishops a circular letter, in which he repeals the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, and re-establishes the Nicene Creed, declaring that Jesus was of one substance with the Father, and that Mary was the Mother of God. The march of Timotheus to the seat of his own government from Constantinople, whither he had been summoned, was more like that of a conqueror than of a preacher of peace. He deposed some bishops, and restored others, and, as the decrees of the council of Chalcedon were the particular objects of his hatred, he restored to the city of Ephesus the patriarchal power which that synod had taken away from it. Unfortunately for the Egyptians, Basilicus, who held their opinions in religion, only reigned for about two years, when he was defeated and put to death by Zeno, who regained the throne. A.D. 477.

(13) As soon as Zeno was again master of the empire, he re-established the creed of the council of Chalcedon, and drove away the Jacobite bishops from their bishoprics. Death, however, removed Timotheus Ælurus before the emperor's orders were put in force in Alexandria, and the Egyptians then chose Peter Mongus as his successor, in direct opposition to the orders from Constantinople. But the emperor was resolved not to be beaten; the bishopric of Alexandria was so much a civil office, that to have given up the appointment to the Egyptians would have been to

allow the people to govern themselves; so he banished Peter, and recalled to the head of the church Timotheus Salophaciolus, who had been living at Canopus ever since he before lost the bishopric.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

(14) But, as the patriarch of Alexandria enjoyed the ecclesiastical revenues, and was still in appearance a teacher of religion, the Alexandrians, in recollection of the former rights of the church, still claimed the appointment. They sent John, a priest of their own faith and dean of the church of John the Baptist, as their ambassador to Constantinople, not to remonstrate against the late acts of the emperor, but to beg that on future occasions the Alexandrians might be allowed the old privilege of choosing their own bishop. The Emperor Zeno seems to have seen through the ambassador's earnestness, and he first bound him by an oath not to accept the bishopric if he should ever be himself chosen to it, and he then sent him back with the promise that the Alexandrians should be allowed to choose their own patriarch on the next vacancy. But unfortunately John's ambition was too strong for his oath, and on the death of Timotheus, which happened soon afterwards, he spent a large sum of money in bribes among the clergy and chief men of the city, and thereby got himself chosen patriarch. On this, the emperor seems to have thought only of punishing John, and he at once gave up the struggle with the Egyptians. Believing that, of the two patriarchs who had been chosen by the people, Peter Mongus, who was living in banishment, would be found more dutiful than John, who was on the episcopal throne, he banished John and recalled Peter; and the latter agreed to the terms of an imperial edict which Zeno then put forth, to heal the disputes in the Egyptian church, and to recall the province to obedience. This celebrated peace-making edict, usually called the Henoticon, is addressed to the clergy and laity of Alexandria, Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis, and is an agreement between the emperor and the bishops who countersigned it, that neither party should ever mention the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, which were the great stumbling-block with the Egyptians. But in all other points the Henoticon is little short of a surrender to the people of the right to choose their own creed; it styles Mary the Mother of

God, and allows that the decrees of the council of Nicæa and Constantinople contain all that is important of the true faith.

(15) John, when banished by Zeno, like many of the former deposed bishops, fled to Rome for comfort and for help. There he met with the usual support; and Felix, bishop of Rome, wrote to Constantinople, remonstrating with Zeno for dismissing the patriarch. But this was only a small part of the emperor's want of success in his attempt at peace-making; for the crafty Peter, who had gained the bishopric by his subscribing to the peace-making edict, was no sooner safely seated on his episcopal throne than he denounced the council of Chalcedon and its decrees as heretical, and drove out of their monasteries all those who still adhered to that faith. Nephalius, one of these monks, wrote to the emperor at Constantinople in complaint, and Zeno sent Cosmas to the bishop to threaten him with his imperial displeasure, and to try to re-establish peace in the church. But the arguments of Cosmas were wholly unsuccessful; and Zeno then sent an increase of force to Arsenius, the military prefect, who settled the quarrel for the time by sending back the most rebellious of the Alexandrians as prisoners to Constantinople.

(16) Soon after this dispute Peter Mongus died, and fortunately he was succeeded in the bishopric by a peace-maker. Athanasius, the new bishop, very unlike his great predecessor of the same name, did his best to heal the angry disputes in the church, and to reconcile the Egyptians to the imperial government.

(17) Hierocles, the Alexandrian, was at this time teaching philosophy in his native city, where his zeal and eloquence in favour of Platonism drew upon him the anger of the Christians and the notice of the government. He was sent to Constantinople to be punished for not believing in Christianity, for it does not appear that, like the former Hierocles, he ever wrote against it. There he bore a public scourging from his Christian torturers with a courage equal to that formerly shown by their forefathers when tortured by his. When some of the blood from his shoulders flew into his hand, he held it out in scorn to the judge, saying with Ulysses, "Cyclops, since human flesh has been thy food, now taste this wine." After his punishment he was banished, but was soon

Suidas, ap. Photium.

Odyss. lib. ix. 347.

allowed to return to Alexandria, and there he again taught openly as before. Paganism never wears so fair a dress as in the writings of Hierocles; his commentary on the Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans is full of the loftiest and purest morality, and not less agreeable are the fragments that remain of his writings on our duties, and his beautiful chapter on the pleasures of a married life. In his essay on Providence and Free-will he shows himself a worthy member of the school of Alexandrian Platonists; he maintains the agreement between the doctrines of Plato and those of Aristotle, and quotes the opinions of his great master, the heaven-taught Ammonius, as of little less or perhaps of not less weight than those of Plato himself. In the Facetiæ of Hierocles we have the earliest jest-book that has been saved from the wreck of time. It is a curious proof of the fallen state of learning; the Sophists had long since made themselves ridiculous; books alone will not make a man of sense; and in the jokes of Hierocles the blunderer is always called a man of learning.

(18) At what time Tryphiodorus the Alexandrian grammarian lived is not certainly known, but most likely about this reign. He has left a short heroic poem, the Taking of Troy, in continuation of the Iliad; but it is a poor work, of little note. Tryphiodorus, however, is better known for his foolish attempt to rewrite the Odyssey without once using the letter S. Delightful employment for a scholar! Grammarians and critics have often been accused of overlooking the beauties of an author and wasting their time upon trifles, but it is not easy to believe that this childishness of the Alexandrian was anything but an idle boast. His work was probably nothing more than a summary of the contents of the poem. Nor was Tryphiodorus original in his task; for Nestor, a former grammarian, was said to have been the author of an Iliad in which each book was written without the help of the letter by which it was named; thus, there was not a single A in the book Alpha, nor a B in the book Beta.

Suidas.

Eustathius, Proem. Odyss.

Suidas

(19) Coluthus of Lycopolis in the Thebaid was then writing his heroic poem named the Rape of Helen. It is a short, simple, but tame account of the three goddesses quar-

relling about their beauty; of the judgment of Paris, and of Helen's leaving her husband and sailing away with Paris to Troy. But it has no poetical beauties to make up for its unclassical style. The new philosophy of the pagans had taken away the reality from Jupiter and Juno, and all enthusiasm from their followers; though at the same time it had made the goddesses more modest. In the poem of Coluthus they only quarrel about the beauty of their faces, and the utmost boldness that Venus is guilty of is to uncover her bosom before the judge.

(20) In the absence of other Christian authors we may mention Euthalius, at this time bishop of Sulca in the Thebaid. He has left some notes on Paul's epistles, dedicated to his superior, Bishop Athanasius.

(21) A little later, the grammarian Hesychius wrote his valuable Greek Lexicon, which was the first that really deserved that name. Many centuries earlier Apion and Apollonius the son of Archibius, had each written a lexicon of the words peculiar to Homer; and Theon and Didymus had done the same service for the tragic and comic poets. After these a certain Diogenianus had begun to make a general lexicon, which he proposed to call a Help to the Poor, because there were so few books for the learner that he usually had to gain his knowledge from the professors at too great a cost for a poor man easily to become learned. Accordingly, following the plan of Diogenianus, and copying from the works of Aristarchus, Apion, Heliodorus, and others, and taking care, as he tells us, to write straight and form his letters neatly, Hesychius has left us a general lexicon of the less common words in the Greek language. He was a Christian, as appears from his quoting several books of the Old and New Testament as well as some of the Fathers; he was a native of Alexandria; but at what time he lived is not certainly known.

(22) Aetius the Alexandrian physician has left a large work containing a full account of the state of Egyptian medicine at this time. He describes the diseases and their remedies, quoting the recipes of numerous authors, from the King Nechepsus, Galen, Hippocrates, and Dioscorides, down to Archbishop Cyril. He is not wholly free from superstition, as when making use of a green jasper set in a ring; but

he observes that the patients recovered as soon when the stone was plain as when a dragon was engraved upon it, according to the recommendation of Nechepsus. In Nile water he finds every virtue, and does not forget dark paint for the ladies' eyebrows, and Cleopatra-wash for the face.

(23) ANASTASIUS, the next emperor, followed the wise policy which Zeno had entered upon in the latter years of his reign, and he strictly adhered to the terms of the peace-making edict. The four patriarchs of Alexandria who were chosen during this reign, John, a second John, Dioscorus, and Timotheus, were all of the Jacobite faith; and the Egyptians readily believed that the emperor was of the same opinion. When called upon by the quarrelling theologians, he would neither reject nor receive the decrees of the council of Chalcedon, and by this wise conduct he governed Egypt without any religious rebellion during a long reign. But the bishops of the rest of the empire were by no means pleased with this policy, which instead of dividing the laity into parties broke up much of the power of the clergy; and the ecclesiastical historian tells us that the churches of the whole world were filled with doubt and disturbance. The orthodox bishop of Tunis adds that an unclean spirit seized everybody in Egypt; men, children, slaves, monks, and clergymen lost the use of speech and ran about barking like dogs, while strangers were free from the disease. Nobody knew the cause of their madness, till an angel in the form of a man told them that it all came from their wickedness in rejecting the decrees of the council of Chalcedon.

A.D. 491. Eutychii Annales.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii.

Victor, ap. Scaliger.

(24) The election of Dioscorus, however, the third patriarch of this reign, did not go off altogether quietly. He was the cousin of a former patriarch, Timotheus Ælurus, which, if we view the bishopric as a civil office, might be a reason for the emperor's wishing him to have the appointment. But it was no good reason with the Alexandrians, who declared that he had not been chosen according to the canons of the apostles; and the magistrates of the city were forced to employ the troops to lead him in safety to his throne. After the first ceremony,

Theophanes, Chronogr.

he went, as was usual at an installation, to St. Mark's church, and there the clergy robed him in the patriarchal state robes. The grand procession then moved through the streets to the church of St. John, where the new bishop went through the communion service. But the city was far from quiet during the whole day, and in the riot Theodosius the son of Calliopus, a man of Augustalian rank, was killed by the mob. The Alexandrians treated the affair as murder, and punished with death those who were thought guilty; but the emperor looked upon it as a rebellion of the citizens, and the bishop had to go on an embassy to Constantinople to appease his just anger.

(25) Anastasius, who had deserved the obedience of the Egyptians by his moderation, pardoned their ingratitude when they offended; but he was the last Byzantine emperor who governed Egypt with wisdom, he was the last who failed to enforce the decrees of the council of Chalcedon. It may well be doubted whether any wise conduct on the part of the rulers could have healed the quarrel between the two countries, and made the Egyptians forget the wrongs that they had suffered from the Greeks; but at any rate it was never again tried. Chronicon Orientale.

(26) By the tenth year of the reign of Anastasius, the Persians, after overrunning a large part of Syria and defeating the Roman generals, passed Pelusium and entered Egypt. The army of Kobades laid waste the whole of the Delta up to the very walls of Alexandria. Eustatius the military prefect led out his forces against the invaders, and fought many battles with doubtful success; but as the capital was safe the Persians were at last obliged to retire, leaving the people ruined as much by the loss of a harvest as by the sword. Alexandria suffered severely from famine and the diseases which followed in its train; and history has gratefully recorded the name of Urbib, a Christian Jew of great wealth, who relieved the starving poor of that city with his bounty. Three hundred persons were squeezed to death in the church of Arcadius on Easter Sunday in the press of the crowd to receive his alms. As war brought on disease and famine, so these brought on rebellion. The people of Alexandria, in want of corn and oil, rose against the magistrates, and many lives were lost in the attempt to quell the riots. Eutychii Annales. A.D. 501. J. Malala.

(27) In the early part of this history we have seen ambitious bishops sent out of the way by a banishment to the Great Oasis; and again as the country became more desolate, criminals were sufficiently separated from the rest of the empire by being sent to Thebes. Alexandria was then the last place in the world in which a pretender to the throne would be allowed to live. But Egypt was now ruined; and Anastasius began his reign by banishing to the fallen Alexandria Longinus, the brother of the late king, and he had him ordained a presbyter, to mark him as unfit for the throne.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

(28) Julianus, who was during a part of this reign the prefect of Egypt, was also a poet, and he has left us a number of short epigrams that form part of the volume of Greek Anthology which was published at Constantinople soon after this time. Christodorus of Thebes was another poet, who joined with Julianus in praising the Emperor Anastasius. He also removed to Constantinople, the seat of patronage; and the fifth book of the Greek Anthology contains his epigrams on the winners in the horse-races in that city and on the statues which stood around the public gymnasium. The poet's song, like the traveller's tale, often related the wonders of the River Nile. The overflowing waters first manured the fields, and then watered the crops, and lastly carried the corn to market; and one writer in the Anthology, to describe the country life in Egypt, has the story of a sailor, who to avoid the dangers of the ocean turned husbandman, and was then shipwrecked in his own meadows.

Lib. iii. 22. 48.

(29) The book-writers at this time sometimes illuminated their more valuable parchments with gold and silver letters, and sometimes employed painters to ornament them with small paintings. The beautiful copy of the work of Dioscorides on Plants in the library at Vienna was made in this reign for the Princess Juliana of Constantinople. In one painting the figure of science or invention is holding up a plant, while on one side of her is the painter drawing it on his canvas, and on the other side is the author describing it in his book (see Fig. 130). Other paintings are of the plants and animals mentioned in the book. A copy of the Book of Genesis, also

Agincourt, vol. iii. 19 and 26.

A.D. 507.

in the library at Vienna, is of the same class and date. A large part of it is written in gold and silver letters; and it has eighty-eight small paintings of various historical subjects. In these the story is well told, though the drawing and perspective are bad and the figures crowded. But these Alexandrian paintings are better than those made in Rome or Constantinople at this time.

Fig. 130.

(30) By the spread of Christianity theatrical representations had been gradually going out of use. The Greek tragedies, as we see in the works of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, those models of pure taste in poetry, are founded on the pagan mythology; and in many of them the gods are brought to walk and talk upon the stage. Hence they of necessity fell under the ban of the clergy. As the Christians became more powerful the several cities of the empire had one by one discontinued these popular spectacles, and horse-races usually took their place. But the Alexandrians were the last people to give up a favourite amusement; and by the end of this reign Alex- J. Malala.

andria was the only city in the empire where tragic and comic actors and eastern dancers were to be seen in the theatre.

(31) The tower or lighthouse on the island of Pharos, the work of days more prosperous than these, had latterly been sadly neglected, with the other buildings of the country. For more than seven hundred years, the pilot on approaching this flat shore after dark had pointed out to his shipmate what seemed a star in the horizon, and comforted him with the promise of a safe entrance into the haven, and told him of Alexander's tower. But the waves breaking against its foot had long since carried away the outworks, and laid bare the foundations; the wall was undermined, and its fall seemed close at hand. The care of Anastasius, however, surrounded it again with piles and buttresses; and this monument of wisdom and science, which deserved to last for ever, was for a short time longer saved from ruin. An epigram in the Anthology informs us that Ammonius was the name of the builder who performed this good work, and to him and to Neptune the grateful sailors then raised their hands in prayer and praise.

Procopius, ap. Villoteson, vol. i. p. 40.

Lib. iv. ch. 23.

Isis, as the Dog-Star, rising.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE REIGNS OF JUSTIN I., JUSTINIAN, JUSTIN II., TIBERIUS, MAURICIUS, PHOCAS, AND HERACLIUS. A.D. 518—640.

(1) JUSTIN I. succeeded Anastasius on the throne of Constantinople, and in the task of defending the empire against the Persians. And this task became every year more difficult as the Greek population of his Egyptian and Asiatic provinces fell off in numbers. For some years after the division of the empire under the sons of Constantine, Antioch in Syria had been the capital from which Alexandria received the emperor's commands. The two cities became very closely united; and now that the Greeks were deserting Antioch, a part of the Syrian church began to adopt the more superstitious creed of Egypt, and to reject the decrees of the council of Chalcedon. Severus bishop of Antioch was successful in persuading a large party in the Syrian church to deny the humanity of the Saviour, and to style Mary the Mother of God. But the chief power in Antioch rested with the opposite party. They answered his arguments by threats of violence, and he had to leave the city for safety. He fled to Alexandria, and with him began the friendship between the two churches which lasted for several centuries. In Alexandria he was received with the honour due to his religious zeal. But though in Antioch his opinions had been too Egyptian for the Syrians, in Alexandria they were too Syrian for the Egyptians. The Egyptians, who said that Jesus had been crucified and died only in appearance, always denied that his body was liable to corruption. Severus, however, argued that it was liable to corruption before the resurrection; and this led him into a new controversy, in which Timotheus the Alexandrian bishop took part against his own more superstitious flock, and sided with his friend the bishop of Antioch. Severus has left us in the Syriac language the baptismal service as performed in Egypt. The priest

A.D. 518.

Chronicon Orientale.

breathes three times into the basin to make the water holy, he makes three crosses on the child's forehead, he adjures the demons of wickedness to quit him, he again makes three crosses on his forehead with oil, he again blows three times into the water in the form of a cross, he anoints his whole body with oil, and then plunges him in the water. Many other natives of Syria soon followed Severus to Alexandria; so many indeed that as Greek literature decayed in that city, Syriac literature rose. Many Syrians also came to study the religious life in the monasteries of Egypt, and after some time the books in the library of the monastery at Mount Nitria were found to be half Arabic and half Syriac.

(2) Justin, the new emperor, again lighted up in Alexandria the flames of discord, which had been allowed to slumber since the publication of Zeno's peace-making edict. But in the choice of the bishop he was not able to command without a struggle. In the second year of his reign, on the death of Timotheus, the two parties again found themselves nearly equal in strength; and Alexandria was for several years kept almost in a state of civil war between those who thought that the body of Jesus had been liable to corruption, and those who thought it incorruptible. The former chose Gaianas, whom his adversaries called a Manichæan; and the latter Theodosius, a Jacobite, who had the support of the prefect; and each of these in his turn was able to drive his rival out of Alexandria.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv. A.D. 518.

Theophanes, Chronogr. Eutychii Annales.

(3) Those Persian forces which in the last reign overran the Delta were chiefly Arabs from the opposite coast of the Red Sea. To call them off from these attacks, and to engage their attention in another quarter, was a natural wish of the statesmen of Constantinople; and for this purpose Anastasius had sent an embassy to the Homeritæ, on the southern coast of Arabia, to persuade them to attack their northern neighbours. The Homeritæ held the strip of coast now called Hadramout. They were enriched, though hardly civilised, by being the channel along which much of the eastern trade passed from India to the Nile, to avoid the difficult navigation of the ocean. They were Jewish Arabs, who had little in common with the Arabs of Yemen, but had frequent intercourse with Abyssinia

Nonnosus, apud Photium.

and the merchants of the Red Sea. Part of the trade of Solomon and the Tyrians was probably to their coast. To this distant and little tribe the emperor of Constantinople now sent a second pressing embassy. Julianus the ambassador went up the Nile from Alexandria, and then crossed the Red Sea, or Indian Sea, as it was also called, to Arabia. He was favourably received by the Homeritæ. Arethas the king gave him an audience in grand barbaric state. He was standing in a chariot drawn by four elephants; he wore no clothing but a cloth of gold around his loins. His arms were laden with costly armlets and bracelets; he held a shield and two spears in his hands, and his nobles stood around him armed, and singing to his honour. When the ambassador delivered the emperor's letter, Arethas kissed the seal, and then kissed Julianus himself. He accepted the gifts which Justin had sent, and promised to move his forces northward against the Persians as requested, and also to keep the route open for the trade to Alexandria.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

(4) JUSTINIAN, the successor of Justin, settled the quarrel between the two Alexandrian bishops by summoning them both to Constantinople, and then sending them into banishment. But this had no effect in healing the divisions in the Egyptian church; and for the next half-century the two parties ranged themselves, in their theological or rather political quarrel, under the names of their former bishops, and called themselves Gaianites and Theodosians. Nor did the measures of Justinian tend to lessen the breach between Egypt and Constantinople. He appointed Paul to the bishopric, and required the Egyptians to receive the decrees of the council of Chalcedon. After two years Paul was displaced either by the emperor or by his flock; and Zoilus was then seated on the episcopal throne by the help of the imperial forces. He maintained his dangerous post for about six years, when the Alexandrians rose in open rebellion, overpowered the troops, and drove him to seek his safety in flight; and the Jacobite party then turned out all the bishops who held the Greek faith.

Theophanes, Chronogr. A.D. 527.

Eutych'l Annales.

(5) When Justinian heard that the Jacobites were masters

of Egypt he appointed Apollinarius to the joint office of prefect and patriarch of Alexandria, and sent him with a large force to take possession of his bishopric. Apollinarius marched into Alexandria in full military dress at the head of his troops; but when he entered the church he laid aside his arms, and putting on the patriarchal robes began to celebrate the rites of his religion. The Alexandrians were by no means overawed by the force with which he had entered the city; they pelted him with a shower of stones from every corner of the church, and he was forced to withdraw from the building in order to save his life. But three days afterwards the bells were rung through the city, and the people were summoned to meet in the church on the following Sunday, to hear the emperor's letter read. On the Sunday morning the whole city flocked to hear and to disobey Justinian's orders. Apollinarius began his address by threatening his hearers that, if they continued obstinate in their opinions, their children should be made orphans and their widows given up to the soldiery; and he was as before stopped with a shower of stones. But this time he was prepared for the attack: this Christian bishop had placed his troops in ambush round the church, and on a signal given they rushed out on his unarmed flock, and by his orders the crowds within and without the church were put to rout by the sword, the soldiers waded up to their knees in blood, and the city and whole country yielded its obedience for the time to bishops who held the Greek faith.

(6) Henceforth the Melchite or royalist patriarchs, who were appointed by the emperor and had the authority of civil prefects, and were supported by the power of the military prefect, are scarcely mentioned by the historian of the Coptic church. They were too much engaged in civil affairs to act the part of ministers of religion. They collected their revenues very much in corn, and carried on a large export trade, transporting their stores to those parts of Europe where they would fetch the best price. On one occasion we hear of a small fleet belonging to the church of Alexandria, consisting of thirteen ships of about thirty tons burden each, and bearing ten thousand bushels of corn, being overtaken by a storm on the coast of Italy. The princely

Chronicon Orientale.

Leontius, Acta Sanct. Jan. xxiii.

income of the later patriarchs, raised from the churches of all Egypt under the name of the offerings of the pious, sometimes amounted to two thousand pounds of gold, or eighty thousand pounds sterling. But while these Melchite or royalist bishops were enjoying the ecclesiastical revenues, and administering the civil affairs of the diocese and of the great monasteries, there was a second bishop who held the Jacobite faith, and who, having been elected by the people according to the ancient forms of the church, equally bore the title of patriarch, and administered in his more humble path to the spiritual wants of his flock. The Jacobite bishop was always a monk. At his ordination he was declared to be elected by the popular voice, by the bishops, priests, deacons, monks, and all the people of Lower Egypt: and prayers were offered up through the intercession of the Mother of God, and of the glorious apostle Mark. The two churches no longer used the same prayer book. The Melchite church continued to use the old liturgy, which, as it had been read in Alexandria for time out of mind, was called the liturgy of St. Mark, altered, however, to declare that the Son was of the same substance with the Father. But the Coptic church made use of the newer liturgies by their own champions, Bishop Cyril, Basil of Cæsarea, and Gregory Nazianzen. These three liturgies were all in the Coptic language, and more clearly denied the two natures of Christ. Of the two churches the Coptic had less learning, more bigotry, and opinions more removed from the simple truths of the New Testament; but then the Coptic bishop alone had any moral power to lead the minds of his flock towards piety and religion. Had the emperors been at all times either humane or politic enough to employ bishops of the same religion as the people, they would perhaps have kept the good will of their subjects; but as it was, the Coptic church, smarting under its insults, and forgetting the greater evils of a foreign conquest, would sometimes look with longing eyes to the condition of their neighbours, their brethren in faith, the Arabic subjects of Persia.

Renaudot, Liturgiæ Orientales.

(7) The Christianity of the Egyptians was a superstition of the lowest and grossest kind; and as it spread over the land it embraced the whole nation within its pale, not so

much by purifying the pagan opinions as by lowering itself to their level, and fitting itself to their corporeal notions of the Creator. This was not a little brought about by the custom of using the old temples for Christian churches: the form of worship was in part guided by the form of the building, and even the old traditions were engrafted on the new religion. Thus the traveller Antoninus, after visiting the remarkable places in the Holy Land, came to Egypt to search for the chariots of the Egyptians who pursued Moses, petrified into rocks at the bottom of the Red Sea, and for the footsteps left in the sands by the infant Jesus while he dwelt in Egypt with his parents. At Memphis he inquired why one of the doors in the great temple of Pthah, then used as a church, was always closed; and he was told that it had been rudely shut against the infant Jesus five hundred years before, and mortal strength had never since been able to open it.

Acta Sanctorum, Maii, vol. ii.

(8) The records of the empire declared that the first Cæsars had kept six hundred and forty-five thousand men under arms to guard Italy, Africa, Spain, and Egypt, a number perhaps much larger than the truth; but Justinian could with difficulty maintain one hundred and fifty thousand ill-disciplined troops, a force far from large enough to hold even those provinces that remained to him. During the latter half of his reign the eastern frontier of this falling empire was sorely harassed by the Persians under their King Chosroes. They overran Syria, defeated the army of the empire in a pitched battle, and then took Antioch. By these defeats the military roads were stopped; Egypt was cut off from the rest of the empire and could be reached from the capital only by sea. Hence the emperor was driven to a change in his religious policy. He gave over the persecution of the Jacobite opinions, and even went so far in one of his decrees as to call the body of Jesus incorruptible, as he thought that these were the only means of keeping the allegiance of his subjects or the friendship of his Arab neighbours, all of whom, as far as they were Christians, held the Jacobite view of the Nicene Creed, and denied the two natures of Christ.

Agathias.

Evagrius, Eccl. Hist. lib. iv.

Abul-Pharag. Hist. Dyn.

(9) As the forces of Constantinople were driven back by

the victorious armies of the Persians, the emperors had lost, among other fortresses, the capital of Arabia Nabatæa, that curious rocky fastness that well deserved the name of Petra, and which had been garrisoned by Romans from the reign of Trajan till that of Valens. On this loss it became necessary to fortify a new frontier post on the Egyptian side of the Elanitic Gulf. Justinian then built the fortified monastery near Mount Sinai, to guard the only pass by which Egypt could be entered without the help of a fleet; and when it was found to be commanded by one of the higher points of the mountain he beheaded the engineer who built it, and remedied the fault, as far as it

Eutychii Annales.

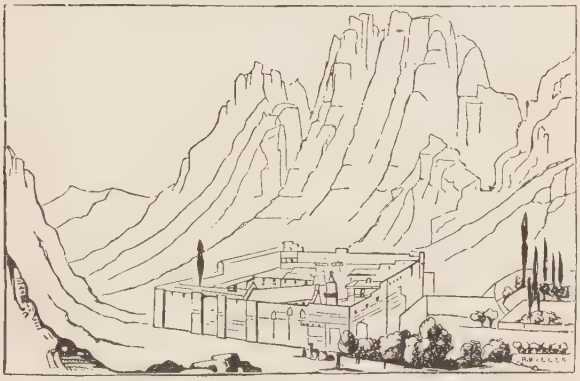


Fig. 131.

could be done, by a small fortress on the higher ground (see Fig. 131). This monastery was held by the Egyptians, and maintained out of the Egyptian taxes. It was finished in the thirtieth year of his reign, and it stands, as the monkish inscription would wish us to believe, on the spot where the Almighty spoke to Moses. In history we are so often misled by names, and facts are so often hid behind words, that it is sometimes useful to recall the attention to what is passing. When the Egyptians were formerly masters of their own country, before the Persian and Greek conquests, they were governed by a race of priests, and the temples were their only fortresses. The temples of Thebes were the citadels of

the capital, and the temples of Elephantine guarded the frontier. So now, when the military prefect is too weak to make himself obeyed, the emperor tries to govern through means of the Christian priesthood; and when he is forced to get the Egyptians to defend their own frontier, he builds a monastery and garrisons it with monks. The Greek manuscript of the Bible, the pride of St. Petersburg, called the Sinaitic manuscript, was brought from this monastery, and was perhaps written at this time as a necessary piece of furniture for the new building. There are several passages in it which show that the scribe was not free from the monophysite opinions of his day, particularly that in John i. 18, which describes Jesus as "the only-begotten God."

(10) Two other large and strong monasteries were about

Fig. 132.

the same time built in the desert near the Red Sea, about twenty miles from the coast and eighty miles to the south of Suez. They are of the same style as that at Sinai, except that the walls are of unburnt brick. Like that monastery, they show their builders' distrust of their Arab neighbours

by having no door. The traveller, if he is to be admitted, is lifted up in a basket by a rope let down from the top of the wall. One of these monasteries is dedicated to St. Anthony, and the other (see Fig. 132) to St. Paul, the first hermit. For the last thirteen centuries a body of monks has never been wanting in the chapels within to celebrate Christian worship, undisturbed by the fierce wars and violent revolutions which have raged on the outside; they have been

Fig. 133.

sheltered by the desert, by their poverty, by their inoffensiveness, and by their religious character, rather than by the strength of their walls. The vaulted chapel in that of St. Paul (see Fig. 133), built partly of stone, but chiefly of unburnt bricks, has pointed arches of various forms, and is not unlike the inside of one of our own early churches.

(11) Part of the Egyptian trade to the East was carried on through the islands of Taprobana or Ceylon, and Dios-

corides or Socotara; but it was chiefly in the hands of uneducated Arabs of Ethiopia, who were little able to communicate to the world much knowledge of the countries from which they brought their highly valued goods. At Ceylon they met with traders from beyond the Ganges and from China, of whom they bought the silk which Europeans had formerly thought a product of Arabia. At Ceylon was a Christian church, with a priest and a deacon, frequented by the Christians from Persia, while the natives of the place were pagans. The coins there used were Roman, borne thither by the course of trade, which during so many centuries carried the gold and silver eastward. The trade was lately turned more strongly into this channel because a war had sprung up between the two tribes of Jewish Arabs, the Hexumitæ of Abyssinia, on the coast of the Red Sea near Adule, and the Homeritæ, who dwelt in Arabia on the opposite coast, at the southern end of the Red Sea. The Homeritæ had quarrelled with the Alexandrian merchants in the Indian trade, and had killed some of them as they were passing their mountains from India to the country of the Hexumitæ. On this the Hexumitæ found the trade injured, and they took up arms to keep the passage open for the merchants. Hadad their king crossed the Red Sea and conquered his enemies; he put to death Damianus, the king of the Homeritæ, and made a new treaty with the emperor of Constantinople. The Hexumitæ promised to become Christians. They sent to Alexandria to beg for a priest to baptize them, and to ordain their preachers; and Justinian sent John, a man of piety and high character, the dean of the church of St. John, who returned with the ambassadors and became bishop of the Hexumitæ.

Cosmas Indicopleustes.

Theophanes, Chronogr.

(12) It was possibly this conquest of the Homeritæ by Hadad king of the Hexumitæ which was recorded on the monument of Adule, at the foot of the inscription set up eight centuries earlier by Ptolemy Euergetes. The monument is a throne of white marble. The conqueror, whose name had been broken away before the inscription was copied, there boasts that he crossed over the Red Sea and made the Arabians and Sabæans pay him tribute. On his own continent he defeated the tribes to the

Cosmas Indicopl. lib. ii.

north of him, and opened the passage from his own country to Egypt; he also marched eastward, and conquered the tribes on the African incense coast; and lastly, he crossed the Astaborus to the snowy mountains in which that branch of the Nile rises, and conquered the tribes between that stream and the Astapus. This valuable inscription, which tells us of snowy mountains within the tropics, was copied by Cosmas, a merchant of Alexandria, who passed through Adule in his way to India.

(13) Former emperors, Anastasius and Justin, had sent several embassies to these nations at the southern end of the Red Sea; to the Homeritæ, to persuade them to attack the Persian forces in Arabia, and to the Hexumitæ, for the encouragement of trade. Justinian also sent an embassy to the Homeritæ under Abram; and, as he was successful in his object, he entrusted a second to Abram's son Nonnosus. Nonnosus landed at Adule on the Abyssinian coast, and then travelled inward for fifteen days to Auxum, the capital. This country was then called Ethiopia; it had gained the name which before belonged to the valley of the Nile between Egypt and Meroë. On his way to Auxum, he saw flocks of wild elephants, to the number, as he supposed, of five thousand. After delivering his message to Elesbaas, then king of Auxum, he crossed the Red Sea to Caisus, king of the Homeritæ, a grandson of that Arethas to whom Justin had sent his embassy. Notwithstanding the natural difficulties of the journey, and those arising from the tribes through which he had to pass, Nonnosus performed his task successfully, and on his return home wrote a history of his embassies.

Nonnosus, apud Photium.

(14) The advantage gained to the Hexumitæ by their invasion of the Homeritæ was soon lost, probably as soon as their forces were withdrawn. The trade through the country of the Homeritæ was again stopped; and such was the difficulty of navigation from the incense coast of Africa to the mouths of the Indus, that the loss was severely felt at Auxum. Elesbaas therefore undertook to repeat the punishment which had been before inflicted on his less civilised neighbours, and again to open the trade to the merchants from the Nile. It was while he was preparing his forces for this invasion that Cosmas, the

Cosmas Indicopl. lib. ii.

Alexandrian traveller, passed through Adule; and he copied for the king of Auxum the inscription above spoken of, which recorded the victories of his predecessor over the enemies he was himself preparing to attack.

(15) The invasion by Elesbaas, or Elesthæus, as he is also named, was immediately successful. The Homeritæ were conquered, their ruler was overthrown; and, to secure their future obedience, the conqueror set over these Jewish Arabs an Abyssinian Christian for their king. Esimaphæus was chosen for that post; and his first duty was to convert his new subjects to Christianity. Political reasons as well as religious zeal would urge him to this undertaking, to make the conquered bear the badge of the conqueror. For this purpose he engaged the assistance of Gregentius, a bishop, who was to employ his learning and eloquence in the cause. Accordingly, in the palace of Threlletum, in the presence of their new king, a public dispute was held between the Christian bishop, and Herban, a learned Jew. Gregentius has left us an account of the controversy, in which he was wholly successful, being helped, perhaps, by the threats and promises of the king. The arguments used were not quite the same as they would be now. The bishop explained the Trinity as the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Mind or Father, and resting on the Word or Son, which was then the orthodox view of this mysterious doctrine. On the other hand, the Jew quoted the Old Testament to show that the Lord their God was one Lord. On a sudden the whole of the Jews present were struck blind. Their sight, however, was restored to them on the bishop's praying for them; and they were then all thereby converted and baptized on the spot. The king stood godfather to Herban, and rewarded him with a high office under his government.

Procopius, Persic. i. 20.

Gregentii Disputatio.

(16) Esimaphæus did not long remain king of the Homeritæ. A rebellion soon broke out against him, and he was deposed. Elesbaas, king of Auxum, again sent an army to recall the Homeritæ to their obedience, but this time the army joined in the revolt; and Elesbaas then made peace with the enemy, in hopes of thus gaining the advantages which he was unable to grasp by force of arms. From a Greek inscrip-

Procopius, lib. i. 20.

Valencia's Travels.

tion on a monument at Auxum we learn the name of Aeizanas, another king of that country, who also called himself, either truly or boastfully, king of the opposite coast. He set up the monument to record his victories over the Bougætæ, a people who dwelt to the north of his country, between Auxum and Egypt, and he styles himself the invincible Mars, king of kings, king of the Hexumitæ, of the Ethiopians, of the Sabæans, and of the Homeritæ.

(17) These kings of the Hexumitæ ornamented the city of Auxum with several beautiful and lofty obelisks, each made of a single block of granite like those in Egypt. We must suppose that they were cut and set up by Egyptian workmen, who may have found employment in Abyssinia, when Egypt no longer valued their skill and labour. One obelisk only now stands upright. It is about sixty feet high. It has no hieroglyphics, but is not without sculpture on the sides. The top is not pointed but rounded, and so far its style reminds us of Roman taste in architecture (see Fig. 134). To the Jewish Ethiopians of Abyssinia we are indebted for our knowledge of that curious Hebrew work, the Book of Enoch, which gains its importance from being quoted by the Apostle Jude. This is a spurious book, written much later than it pretends to be, and, like parts of the Sibylline verses and the Testaments of the Patriarchs, in which latter it is so often quoted, it changes the facts of past history into the form of dark hints and unfulfilled prophecy. We do not know in what century the Ethiopic translation was made; but the book itself, which is in part copied from the Old Testament, was written only a few years before the Christian era, with some later additions after the time of Christ. It betrays its date by its prophecies. The writer's pretended knowledge of the future is limited to his real knowledge of the past.

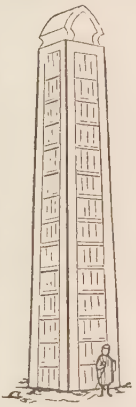


Fig. 134.

(18) Egypt in its mismanaged state seemed to be of little value to the empire but as the means of enriching the prefect and the tax-gatherers; it yielded very little tribute to Constantinople beyond the supply of grain,

Justinian Edict. xiii.

and that by no means regularly. To remedy these abuses Justinian made a new law for the government of the province, with a view of bringing about a thorough reform. By this edict the districts of Menelaites and Marcotes, to the west of Alexandria, were separated from the rest of Egypt, and they were given to the prefect of Libya, whose seat of government was at Parætonium, because his province was too poor to pay the troops required to guard it. The several governments of Upper Egypt, of Lower Egypt, of Alexandria, and of the troops, were then given to one prefect. The two cohorts, the Augustalian and the Ducal, into which the two Roman legions had gradually dwindled, were henceforth to be united under the name of the Augustalian cohort, which was to contain six hundred men, who were to secure the obedience and put down any rebellion of the Egyptian and barbarian soldiers. The already high pay and privileges of this favoured troop were to be increased; and, to secure its loyalty and to keep out Egyptians, nobody was to be admitted into it till his fitness had been inquired into by the emperor's examiners. The first duty of the Augustalian cohort was to collect the supply of corn for Constantinople, and to see it put on board the ships; and as for the supply which was promised to the Alexandrians, the magistrates were to collect it at their own risk, and by means of their own cohort. The corn for Constantinople was required to be in that city before the end of August, or within four months after the harvest, and the supply for Alexandria not more than a month later. The prefect was made answerable for the full collection, and whatever was wanting of that quantity was to be levied on his property and his heirs, at the rate of one *solidus* for three *artabæ* of corn, or about fifteen shillings for fifteen bushels; while, in order to help the collection, the export of corn from Egypt was forbidden from every port but Alexandria, except in small quantities. The corn required for Alexandria and Constantinople, to be distributed as a free gift among the idle citizens, was eight hundred thousand *artabæ*, or four millions of bushels, and the cost of collecting it was fixed at eighty thousand *solidi*, or about sixty thousand pounds. The prefect was ordered to assist the collectors at the head of his cohort, and if he gave credit for the taxes which he was to collect he was to bear the loss

himself. If the archbishop interfered, to give credit and screen an unhappy Egyptian, then he was to bear the loss, and if his property was not enough, the property of the church was to make it good; but if any other bishop gave credit, not only was his property to bear the loss, but he was himself to be deposed from his bishopric; and lastly, if any riot or rebellion should arise to cause the loss of the Egyptian tribute, the tribunes of the Augustalian cohort were to be punished with forfeiture of all property, and the cohort was to be removed to a station beyond the Danube.

(19) Such was the new law which Justinian, the great Roman law-giver, proposed for the future government of Egypt. The welfare of the Egyptians was wholly forgotten. They were to be treated as slaves, whose only duty was to raise corn for the use of their masters at Constantinople, and their taskmasters at Alexandria. They did not even receive from the government the usual benefit of protection from their enemies, and they felt bound to the emperor by no tie either of love or interest. The imperial orders were very little obeyed beyond those places where the troops were encamped; the Arabs were each year pressing closer upon the valley of the Nile, and helping the sands of the desert to defeat the labours of the disheartened husbandman; and the Greek language, which had hitherto followed and marked the route of commerce from Alexandria to Syene, and to the island of Dioscorides in the Indian Ocean, was now but little heard in Upper Egypt. The Alexandrians were sorely harassed by Hæphæstus, a lawyer who had risen by court favour to the chief post in the city. He made monopolies in his own favour of all the necessaries of life, and secured his ill-gotten wealth by ready loans of part of it to Justinian. His zeal for the emperor was at the cost of the Alexandrians, and to save the public granaries he lessened the supply of corn which the citizens looked for as a right. The city was sinking fast; and the citizens could ill bear this loss, for its population, though lessened, was still too large for the fallen state of Egypt.

Cosmas Indicopleustes, lib. iii.

Procopius, Arcana, 26.

(20) The corn of the merchants was shipped from Alexandria to the chief ports of Europe, between Constantinople in the east and Cornwall in the

Leontius, Acta Sanct. Jan. xxiii.

west. Britain had been left by the Romans, as too remote for them to hold in their weakened condition; and the native Britons were then struggling against their Saxon invaders, as in a distant corner of the world, beyond the knowledge of the historian. But to that remote country the Alexandrian merchants sailed every year with corn to purchase tin, enlightening the natives, while they only meant to enrich themselves. Under the most favourable circumstances they sometimes performed the voyage in twenty days. The wheat was sold in Cornwall at the price of a bushel for a piece of silver, perhaps worth about ten pence, or for the same weight of tin, as the tin and the silver were nearly of equal worth. This was the longest of the ancient voyages, being longer than that from the Red Sea to the island of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean; and it had been regularly performed for at least eight centuries without ever teaching the British to venture so far from their native shores. Knowledge and science, with their accompanying arts, had not yet settled in our island; and the Britons had not then learned that the same wind which safely carried back the Alexandrian ships on their homeward voyage could carry British ships to Alexandria.

(21) The suffering and riotous citizens made Alexandria a very unpleasant place of abode for the prefect and magistrates. They therefore built palaces and baths for their own use, at the public cost, at Taposiris, about a day's journey to the west of the city, at a spot yet marked by the remains of thirty-six marble columns, and a lofty tower, once perhaps a lighthouse (see Fig. 135). At the same time it became necessary to fortify the public granaries against the rebellious mob. The corn was brought from the Nile by barges on a canal to the village of Chæreum, and thence to a part of Alexandria named Phialæ, or *the Basins*, where the public granaries stood. In all riots and

Procopius, De ædificiis, lib. vi. 1.

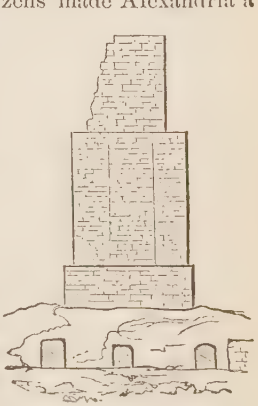


Fig. 135.

rebellions this place had been a natural point of attack; and often had the starving mob broken open these buildings, and seized the corn that was on its way to Constantinople. But Justinian surrounded them with a strong wall against such attacks for the future, and at the same time he rebuilt the aqueduct that had been destroyed in one of the sieges of the city. J. Malala.

(22) In civil suits at law an appeal had always been allowed from the prefect of the province to the emperor, or rather to the prefect of the East at Constantinople; but as this was of course expensive, it was found necessary to forbid it when the sum of money in dispute was small. Justinian forbad all Egyptian appeals for sums less than ten pounds weight of gold, or about five hundred pounds sterling; for smaller sums the judgment of the prefect was to be final, lest the expense should swallow up the amount in dispute. Constitut. xxiii.

(23) In this reign the Alexandrians, for the first time within the records of history, felt the shock of an earthquake. Their naturalists had very fairly supposed that the loose alluvial nature of the soil of the Delta was the cause of earthquakes not being known in Lower Egypt, and believed that it would always save them from a misfortune which often overthrew cities in other countries. Pliny thought that Egypt had been always free from earthquakes. But this shock was felt by everybody in the city; and Agathias, the Byzantine historian, who after reading law in the university of Beiroot, was finishing his studies at Alexandria, says that it was strong enough to make the inhabitants all run into the street for fear the houses should fall upon them. Agathias. Lib. ii. 82.

(24) The reign of Justinian is remarkable for another blow then given to paganism throughout the empire, or at least through those parts of the empire where the emperor's laws were obeyed. Though Constantine the first Christian emperor had discouraged it, though Theodosius had closed the temples, and forbidden the public worship of the Greek and Egyptian gods, nevertheless the teachers of philosophy and science still clung to the old religion as to one branch of their learning, and many of them openly taught its doctrines. Justinian either made a new law, or enforced an

old one, against all such teaching, and threatened the disobedient with severe punishment; and many of the learned men of Alexandria then fled into Syria, to claim protection of the Persians, and to avoid the persecution without wounding their consciences. The philosophical school, through the works of Plotinus and Porphyry and their successors, had altered the face of paganism, and, through the writings of Clemens, Origen, and other Alexandrian fathers, had worked no little change on the opinions of the Christian world; but it had been closed when Sopater the professor was put to death by Constantine. Since that time the laws against the philosophers had been less strictly enforced; but under Justinian the pagan schools were again and for ever brought to a close. Isidorus the Platonist and Salustius the Cynic were among the learned men of greatest note who then withdrew from Alexandria. Isidorus had been chosen by Marinus as his successor in the Platonic chair at Athens, to fill the high post of the Platonic successor; but he had left the Athenian school to Zenodotus, a pupil of Proclus, and had removed to Alexandria. Salustius the Cynic was a Syrian, who had removed with Isidorus from Athens to Alexandria. He was virtuous in his morals though jocular in his manners, and as ready in his witty attacks upon the speculative opinions of his brother philosophers as upon the vices of the Alexandrians. These learned men, with Damascius and others from Athens, were kindly received by the Persians, who when they soon afterwards made a treaty of peace with Justinian, generously bargained that these men, the last teachers of paganism, should be allowed to return home, and pass the rest of their days in quiet.

Suidas.

Damascius, apud Photium.

(25) On the flight of the pagan philosophers, very little learning was left in Alexandria. Themistius, a deacon, was at the head of the sect of Agnoetæ, who were so called because they taught that Jesus was not infinite in wisdom, and might possibly have been ignorant of some things. Theodorus, a monk, took the other side in this controversy, but was nevertheless thought equally heretical with Themistius, as he equally denied the two natures of Christ, and said that divinity itself had suffered on the cross. One of the most remarkable men in this age of ignorance

Photius.

was Cosmas, an Alexandrian merchant, who wished that the world should not only be enriched but enlightened by his travels. After making many voyages through Ethiopia to India for the sake of gain, he quitted trade and became a monk and an author. When he writes as a traveller about the Christian churches of India and Ceylon, and the inscriptions which he copied at Adule in Abyssinia, everything that he tells us is valuable; but when he reasons as a monk, the case is sadly changed. He is of the dogmatical school which forbids all inquiry as heretical. He fights the battle which has been so often fought before and since, and is even still fought so resolutely, the battle of religious ignorance against scientific knowledge. He sets the words of the Bible against the results of science; he denies that the world is a sphere, and quotes the Old Testament against the pagan astronomers, to show that it is a plane, covered by the firmament as by a roof, above which he places the kingdom of heaven. His work is named Christian Topography, and he is himself usually called Cosmas Indicopleustes, from the country which he visited.

(26) The arguments employed by Cosmas were unfortunately but too often used by the Christian world in general, who were even willing to see learning itself fall with the overthrow of paganism. The great poets were forbidden because they had written about their gods. Statues were no longer admired because they had been made to be worshipped. Among the Egyptians in particular, mathematics, astronomy, history, and indeed all learning, had been in the hands of the priests; so when knowledge was divided into sacred and profane, whatever was not drawn from the Scriptures was slighted and neglected; and this was one of the chief causes of the darkness which overspread the world during the middle ages. But we must confine ourselves to what took place in Egypt. When Christianity was first preached in Alexandria, the converts saw no opposition between religion on the one hand and philosophy and science on the other, while many thought that the spread of the gospel truths might be aided by learning. Hence they founded the catechetical school, which, though uncountenanced and unendowed by emperors, brought forth Christian scholars, who at the time threw the well-paid

pagan professors of the Alexandrian Museum into the shade. The troubled and rebellious state of Egypt during the fifty years which began with the persecution of Decius and ended with that of Diocletian, mark an important break and change in the history of Christianity. Before that time the Christian may trace with unmixed pleasure the silent struggle between Christianity and paganism, and, watching the action and reaction of these systems on one another, may note with pride, as far as the scanty annals allow, the influence of Christianity on manners, philosophy, and pagan literature. But no sooner were the Christians numerous enough to be divided into sects, and enough at ease to quarrel about their opinions, than we find, unfortunately, ignorance and the more popular opinions ranged on one side, against learning with the less popular opinions on the other. We then find creeds and fetters placed on the mind; the catechetical school is closed under the persecution of the Homoousian party, and the opinions of the unlettered monks are quoted as of greater weight than those of Clemens and Origen. Soon afterwards the pagan philosophers are forbidden to teach; and lastly, even the more certain truths of mathematics and astronomy are disbelieved, because they are not found in the Bible. Such were the steps by which learning fell in Alexandria, hastened by the fall of the Greek power, and by the Egyptians gaining strength in their own country, and no doubt by many other causes too deep for our search.

(27) During the latter years of the government of Apollinarius, such was his unpopularity as a spiritual bishop, that both the rival parties, the Gaianites and the Theodosians, had been building places of worship for themselves, and the more zealous Jacobites had quietly left the churches to Apollinarius and the royalists. But on the death of an archdeacon they again came to blows with the bishop; and a monk had his beard torn off his chin by the Gaianites in the streets of Alexandria. The emperor was obliged to interfere, and he sent the abbot Photinus to Egypt to put down this rebellion, and heal the quarrel in the church. Apollinarius died soon afterwards, and Justinian then appointed John to the joint office of prefect of the city and patriarch of the church. The new archbishop was accused of being a Manichæan; but this

Theophanes, Chronogr.

seems to mean nothing but that he was too much of the Egyptian party, and that, though he was the imperial patriarch, and not acknowledged by the Coptic church, yet his opinions were disliked by the Greeks. On his death, which happened in about three years, they chose Peter, who held the Jacobite or Egyptian opinions, and whose name is not mentioned in the Greek lists of the patriarchs. Peter died in the same year with the emperor.

(28) Under Justinian we again find some small traces of a national coinage in Egypt. Ever since the reign of Diocletian, the old Egyptian coinage had been stopped, and the Alexandrians had used money of the same weight, and with the same Latin inscriptions as the rest of the empire. But under Justinian, though the inscriptions on the coins are still Latin, they have the name of the city in Greek letters. Like the coins of Constantinople, they have a cross, the emblem of Christianity: but while the other coins of the empire have the Greek numeral letters, E, I, K, Λ, or M, to denote the value, meaning 5, 10, 20, 30, or 40, the coins of Alexandria have the letters IB for 12, showing that they were on a different system of weights from those of Constantinople. On these the head of the emperor is in profile (see Fig. 136). But later in his reign

De Saulcy, Monet. Byz.

Fig. 136.

the style was changed, the coins were made larger, and the head of the emperor had a front face. On these larger coins the numeral letters are ΛΓ for 33. We thus learn that the Alexandrians at this time paid and received money rather by weight than by tale, and avoided all depreciation of the currency. As the early coins marked 12 had become lighter by wear, those which were meant to be of about three times their value were marked 33 (see Fig. 137).

(29) In the reign of JUSTIN II., the successor of Justinian,

an inscription in the island of Philæ tells us that the temple of Isis was again a Christian church under a bishop of the name of Theodorus and under the guard of a prefect of the same name. We have seen that in the reign of Marcian paganism had regained its old

Inscript. ap. Boeckh.

Fig. 137.

ground and for the time established itself there. Justin II. reigned twelve years, TIBERIUS reigned four years, and MAURICIUS, his son-in-law, twenty; and under these sovereigns the empire gained a little rest from its enemies by a rebellion among the Persians, which at last overthrew their king Chosroes. He fled to Mauricius for help, and was by him restored to his throne, after which the two kingdoms remained at peace to the end of his reign.

Chronicon Alexandr. A.D. 566. A.D. 578. A.D. 582.

(30) Eulogius, the author of some homilies still extant, was bishop of Alexandria; and an epigram upon the hospital which he founded to give a home to poor travellers, whether they came by land or by water, has recorded his piety. He was succeeded by Peter before the end of the reign. To these writers we may add Anastasius, a monk of the monastery of Mount Sinai, who has left a few theological works; as also John Climacus, who lived in the valley of Thola on the side of the same mountain, and who has left a work in praise of the monastic life, under the name of the Ladder to Paradise, which has thirty steps, because Jesus was thirty years old when he began his ministry.

Nicephorus, Eccl. Hist. lib. xviii. 26. Antholog. lib. iv. cb. xii. 1.

(31) But the most remarkable man of Alexandria was John the grammarian, who from his love of laborious learning took the name of Philoponus. In religion he was

a tritheist, which was a common opinion among the Egyptians, and he lost his rank in the church for denying the unity of the Godhead in the Trinity. He has left a treatise written against the opinions of Proclus on the eternity of the world, and also some voluminous commentaries on Aristotle's philosophy, which was rising upon the fall of Platonism and of learning. But while the writings of the great Platonic Christians, Justin, Athenagoras, Origen, and Clemens, are still valued most highly, nobody removes the dust off the Aristotelian writings of Olympiodorus and John Philoponus.

(32) Theophylactus Simocatta was also a native of Egypt, but he removed to Constantinople. There he wrote the life of Mauricius, giving an account of his wars against the Persians, both before and after he was made emperor. But we learn nothing from Theophylactus about his own unfortunate country, except that superstition, taking advantage of the cloud of ignorance that overspread the land, had advanced from the cells in the desert into the capital. He mentions Egypt only to say that a half-human monster rose out of the Nile to frighten the archbishop Peter, and to foretell the death of the emperor; and that on the night that Mauricius died at Constantinople the statues came down from their pedestals in Alexandria. It was in this reign, let us remark, while such was the state of Egypt, that the Roman monk Augustin landed in Kent to preach Christianity to the Saxons. As darkness was closing over one quarter of the world, light was dawning in another.

Photius, lxv. 81.

(33) The Emperor Mauricius was murdered by PHOCAS, who then succeeded him on the throne of Constantinople. No sooner did the news of his death reach Persia than Chosroes, the son of Hormuz, who had married Maria, the daughter of Mauricius, declared the treaty with the Romans at an end, and moved his forces against the new emperor, the murderer of his father-in-law. During the whole of his reign Constantinople was kept in a state of alarm and almost of siege by the Persians; and the crimes and misfortunes of Phocas alike prepared his subjects for a revolt. In the seventh year Alexandria rebelled in favour of the young Heraclius, son

Eutychii Annales. A.D. 602.

Chronicon Alexandr.

of the late prefect of Cyrene; and the patriarch of Egypt was slain in the struggle. Soon afterwards Heraclius entered the port of Constantinople with his fleet, and Phocas was put to death, after an unfortunate reign of eight years, in which he had lost every province of the empire.

Eutychii Annales. A.D. 610.

(34) During the first three years of the reign of Heraclius, Theodorus was bishop of Alexandria; but upon his death the wishes of the Alexandrians so strongly pointed to John, the son of the prefect of Cyprus, that the emperor, yielding to their request, appointed him to the bishopric. Alexandria was not a place in which a good man could enjoy the pleasures of power without feeling the weight of its duties. It was then suffering under all those evils which usually befall the capital of a sinking state. It had lost much of its trade, and its poorer citizens no longer received a free supply of corn. The unsettled state of the country was starving the larger cities, and the population of Alexandria was suffering from want of employment. The civil magistrates had removed their palace to a distance. But the new bishop seemed formed for these unfortunate times, and though appointed by the emperor, he was in every respect worthy of the free choice of the citizens. He was foremost in every work of benevolence and charity. The five years of his government were spent in lightening the sufferings of the people, and he gained the truly Christian name of John the Almsgiver. Beside his private acts of kindness he established throughout the city hospitals for the sick and almshouses for the poor and for strangers, and as many as seven lying-in hospitals for poor women. John was not less active in outrooting all that he thought heresy, and particularly in opposing Peter Gnapheus, who had ventured to say that the Son of God was crucified for us; and the patriarch succeeded in convincing him that Christ had not died, and was unsuffering. If man were a creature only of understanding, without habits, without feelings of love and hatred, the sciences of morals, politics, and religion, might be studied, like problems in pure mathematics, without uncertainty and without quarrels. But experience has amply proved that, with the close union

Leontius, apud Baronium.

between our wishes and our belief, between our feelings and our judgment, no logical arguments are so convincing as an act of kindness; and the only conversions among the Christians that are to be found in this history are those brought about by John the Almsgiver.

(35) The first years of the reign of Heraclius are chiefly marked by the successes of the Persians. While Chosroes their king was himself attacking Constantinople, one general was besieging Jerusalem and a second overrunning Lower Egypt. Crowds fled before the invading army to Alexandria as a place of safety, and the famine increased as the province of the prefect grew narrower and the population more crowded. To add to the distress, the Nile rose to a less height than usual; the seasons seemed to assist the enemy in the destruction of Egypt. The Patriarch John, who had been sending money, corn, and Egyptian workmen to assist in the pious work of rebuilding the church of Jerusalem, which the Persians had destroyed, immediately found all his means needed, and far from enough, for the poor of Alexandria. On his appointment to the bishopric he found in its treasury eight thousand pounds weight of gold; he had in the course of five years received ten thousand more from the offerings of the pious, as his princely ecclesiastical revenue was named; but this large sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling had all been spent in deeds of generosity or charity, and the bishop had no resource but borrowing, to relieve the misery with which he was surrounded. In the fifth year the unbelievers were masters of Jerusalem, and in the eighth they entered Alexandria, and soon held all the Delta; and in that year the corn which had hitherto been given to the citizens of Constantinople was sold to them at a small price, and before the end of the year the supply from Egypt was wholly stopped.

Abul-Pharag. Dyn. viii.

Leontius, Vit. Johannis.

A.D. 618. Chronicon Alexandr.

(36) When the Persians entered Egypt, the patrician Nicetas, having no forces with which he could withstand their advance, and knowing that no succour was to be looked for from Constantinople, and finding that the Alexandrians were unwilling to support him, fled with the patriarch John the Almsgiver to Cyprus, and

Eutychii Annales.

left the province to the enemy. As John denied that the Son of God had suffered on the cross, his opinions would seem not to have been very unlike those of the Egyptians; but as he was appointed to the bishopric by the emperor, though at the request of the people, he is not counted among the patriarchs of the Coptic church; and one of the first acts of the Persians was to appoint Benjamin, a Jacobite priest, who already performed the spiritual office of bishop of Alexandria, to the public exercise of that duty, and to the enjoyment of the civil dignity and revenues.

Chronicon Orientale.

(37) The troops with which Chosroes conquered and held Egypt were no doubt in part Syrians and Arabs, people with whom the Fellahs or labouring class of Egyptians were closely allied in blood and feelings. Hence arose the readiness with which the whole country yielded when the Roman forces were defeated. But hence also arose the weakness of the Persians, and their speedy loss of this conquest when the Arabs rebelled. Their rule, however, in Egypt was not quite unmarked in the history of these dark ages.

(38) At this time Thomas a Syrian bishop came to Alexandria to correct the Syriac version of the New Testament, which had been made about a century before by Philoxenus. He compared the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, with the Greek manuscripts in the monastery of St. Anthony in the capital; and we still possess the fruits of his learned labour, in which he altered the ancient text to make it agree word for word with the newer Alexandrian manuscripts. From his copy the Philoxenian version is now printed. A Syriac manuscript of the New Testament, written by Alexandrian penmen in the sixth year of Heraclius, is now to be seen in the library of the Augustan friars in Rome. At the same time another Syrian scholar, Paul of Tela, in Mesopotamia, was busy in the Alexandrian monastery of St. Zacchæus in translating the Old Testament into Syriac, from the Septuagint Greek; and he closes his labours with begging the reader to pray for the soul of his friend Thomas. Such was now the reputation of the Alexandrian edition of the Bible, that these scholars preferred it both to the original Hebrew of the Old Testament

Assemani Bib. Orient. vol. i.

Winkelman, Hist. del'Art. lib. ii. 1.

Eichhorn, Repertorium, t. viii. p. 86.

and to the earlier manuscripts of the New. Another work of this time were the medical writings of Aaron the physician of Alexandria, which were written in Syriac, and afterwards much valued by the Arabs. The Syrian monks very much settled in the monastery of Mount Nitria; and in that out-of-the-way spot there remained a colony of them for several centuries, kept up by the occasional arrival of new comers from the churches on the eastern side of the Euphrates. Abul-Pharag. Dyn. viii

(39) For ten years the Egyptians were governed by the Persians, and had a patriarch of their own religion and of their own choice; and the building of the Persian palace in Alexandria proves how quietly they lived under their new masters. But Heraclius was not idle under his misfortunes. The Persians had been weakened by the great rising of the Arabs, who had formed their chief strength on the side of Constantinople and Egypt; and Heraclius, leading his forces bravely against Chosroes, drove him back from Syria and became in his turn the invader, and he then recovered Egypt. The Jacobite patriarch Benjamin fled with the Persians; and Heraclius appointed George to the bishopric, which was declared to have been empty since John the Almsgiver fled to Cyprus. Eutychii Annales.

(40) The rising of the Arabs, which overthrew the power of the Persians in their western provinces, and for a time restored Egypt to Constantinople, was the foundation of the mighty empire of the Caliphs; and the Hegira, or Flight of Mahomet, from which the Arabic historians count their lunar years, took place in the twelfth year of Heraclius. The vigour of the Arab arms rapidly broke the Persian yoke, and the Moslems then overran every province in the neighbourhood. This was soon felt by the Romans, who found the Arabs, even in the third year of their freedom, a more formidable enemy than the Persians whom they had overthrown; and, after a short struggle of only two years, Heraclius was forced to pay a tribute to the Moslems for their forbearance in not conquering Egypt. For eight years he was willing to purchase an inglorious peace by paying tribute to the caliph; but when his treasure failed him and the payment was discontinued, the Arabs Chronicon Orientale.

marched against the nearest provinces of the empire, offering to the inhabitants their choice of either paying tribute or receiving the Mahomedan religion; and they then began on their western frontier that rapid career of conquests which they had already begun against their late masters the Persians on the east.

(41) The Arabs were a hardy race, among whom every man was a soldier, equally brave and regardless of discipline, and too jealous of his personal liberty to give up a tittle of it but when led by the hope of plunder or by religious zeal. They were grave in their deportment, though of lively imagination and full of poetic fire; jealous, hasty, revengeful, just in their dealings, though robbers by profession. Hospitality was their highest virtue, as became natives of the desert; and the first few strokes of the Arab's pump sometimes filled the basin piously placed in front of his cottage to quench the thirst of the traveller; the cistern within, for his own use, was only filled by the overflow from the stranger's basin. Their spears, swords, shields, and military science were far inferior to those of the Greeks, perhaps not better than those of the Egyptians; but then they were urged forward with religious enthusiasm, heroic courage, and a national zeal for plunder emboldened by continued success. Such were the people who were now threatening every province of the Byzantine empire, and who looked upon the worn-out government of Alexandria and the degraded Egyptians as their easiest and richest prey. They marched out of Arabia every man a hero, like Europe to the Crusades, or Greece to the Trojan war, so moved with one wish and one feeling that in their armies the energy and activity of the whole was little less than that of any one man in the ranks.

(42) When the news reached Alexandria that the Roman armies were defeated in Palestine, and that the Moslems had taken Jerusalem and Damascus, and were marching upon Egypt, the patriarch George, either through cowardice or treachery, fled from Alexandria by sea, and the emperor appointed Cyrus to the bishopric. Cyrus was of the Maronite faith, neither believing with George and his Melchite predecessors that Christ had two natures and two wills, nor with the Egyptian Jacobites that he had

Eutychii Annales.

one nature and one will, but he believed with the Emperor Heraclius, who appointed him, that Christ had two natures and only one will; and it was many a year, says the mournful historian, before Egypt saw another Melchite patriarch. But whatever had been the religion of the bishop, it was too late to win the willing obedience of the Egyptians, who heard of the approach of the Moslems without alarm, unwisely fancying that they might gain by a change, and that their church would thereby be left free; and, in the vexation that they felt at being insulted by a handful of their own countrymen, they wholly forgot the greater tyranny they were to suffer from the conqueror.

(43) Amrou the son of Asi entered Egypt from Palestine at the head of four thousand Arabs, burning for the conquest of a country which when governed by a Ptolemy had sent seventy-three thousand men to meet the invading army of Antiochus. But before Amrou had crossed the border of the two countries, while he was near Raphia, the very place where Antiochus had been defeated by Ptolemy Philopator, a messenger reached his camp, bearing a sealed packet from the Caliph Omar. Amrou guessed the contents of the letter, and refused to receive it from the messenger till he had moved his little army a few miles further and stood upon Egyptian soil; he then called together his officers and opened the letter to read to them the orders of the caliph. The cautious Omar commanded that, as his force was hardly great enough for what he was undertaking, he should return to Arabia if he had not already entered Egypt; but if he had already begun the invasion, the caliph promised to send him a larger force to support him.

(44) On this permission and promise of support Amrou marched forward; but he was delayed for a month before the city of Pelusium. Though there was no Greek garrison in the place, it was defended by its native and barbarian troops; and he only made himself master of it after a regular siege. But after this first success the whole of Egypt was open to him. He might have marched from Magdolus to Syene without meeting with any opposition, except from the two or three cities that were garrisoned by Greeks. The Egyptians would not take so much part in the struggle as to withhold the supplies of food from the invaders. Like the ass in the

fable, they would not fight to save themselves from a change of masters. He marched towards Memphis, and met with no hindrance to his little army till he came to Babylon, a strong Roman fortress on the Nile, a few miles below Memphis (see Fig. 138), and where the river was crossed by a bridge

Fig. 138.

of boats to that great city. From the Mokattam hills behind Babylon the Arabs, looking over the most beautiful and richest plain in Egypt, could just see the great city of Memphis towards which they were in march (see Fig 139). The blue river is there divided by the sycamore trees of the little island of Rhoda, so named after its rose-gardens. The valley is dotted with groves and villages and canals sparkling in the sun. On the western hills, on the further side of the plain, about nine miles off, are clearly to be seen the three great pyramids, the wonder of the world. Looking up the valley, towards the south, the river and the line of western hills nearly meet in the distance, but between them might be seen the wished-for prize, the white tops of the citadel and great temples of Memphis, lighted up by the sunshine, and glittering through the dark groves of palm-trees and acacias on that side of the river. The Arabs on their arrival laid siege to the castle of Babylon in due form. This castle was of the usual form and strength of the fixed Roman camps, a four-sided plot of ground enclosed by strong and lofty walls above thirty feet high, with round towers yet higher at the corners and along the sides. The Greeks defended themselves bravely behind these fortifications, and during a blockade of seven months Amrou met with several repulses. But as his camp was well supplied with necessaries by the Egyptians, the loss of time was no injury to him. He wrote to Omar for reinforcements, and the caliph, well pleased with what he had done, sent him four thousand more men. But even with this force of eight thousand men Amrou would not soon have overcome the garrison had he not been helped by the treachery

of the Egyptians. Makoukas, the governor of Memphis, the prefect of the Egyptian taxes, only concealed his hatred of the Greeks through fear of punishment. He had, either through treachery or negligence, withheld the Egyptian tribute ever since the armies of Constantinople had been too

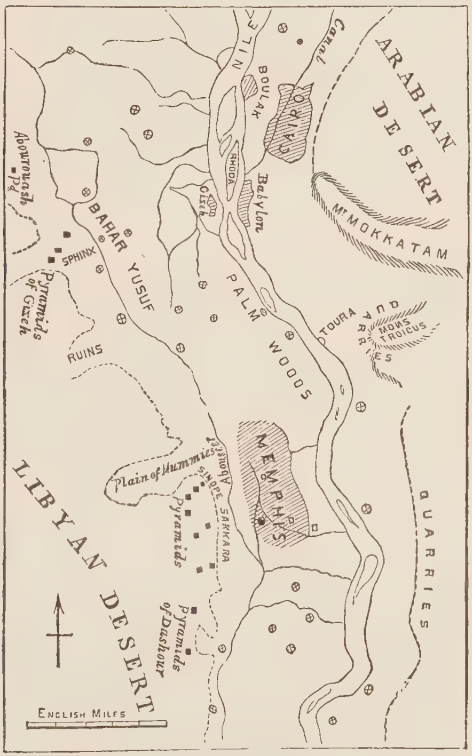


Fig. 139.

much engaged with the Persians and Moslems to reduce Egypt to its usual obedience. Makoukas pointed out to the garrison the difficulty of any longer defending Babylon against the increased force of the Moslems, and he persuaded

most of them, together with the chief men of the Egyptians, to quit the citadel by the southern gate and withdraw with him into the small island of Rhoda in the Nile; and they then broke down the bridge behind them. By this folly on the part of the Greeks the citadel was left with only half a garrison, and the Mahomedans, putting their scaling-ladders against the walls, and raising the encouraging shout of "God is great," made themselves masters of one of the strongest fortifications in Egypt, while the rest of the garrison, flying to their boats, joined their countrymen on the little island.

(45) Amrou had before offered to the city and garrison their choice of three conditions; either to pay tribute to the caliph, to embrace the Mahomedan religion, or battle without quarter; and the Egyptians of Memphis had already privately and traitorously agreed to the first. But the Greeks, even if their courage had wholly failed them, hated the Arabs too much to think of anything but the last; therefore, seeing the city in the hands of the enemy, they took to their boats and quitted the island to march towards Alexandria, leaving Memphis unguarded. In the meantime Makoukas undertook, on behalf of the Egyptians, to settle the terms of surrender for the whole country. The Arabs were to leave them undisturbed in their religion, on condition of their paying a tribute to the caliph of two pieces of gold, perhaps one pound sterling, for every male within the military age; and the mistake of the historian, or perhaps the insolence of the conqueror, fixed the number who were liable to this poll-tax at four millions, a number more than equal to the whole population of Egypt The Egyptians further undertook to feed the Mahomedan army, to make bridges over the Nile for them in their march to Alexandria, and to furnish them with everything that was necessary in their attack upon the Greeks.

Eutychii Annales.

(46) Amrou then marched in pursuit of the garrison, whom he overtook at Cera Shoraic, on the west bank of the Canobic branch, about forty-five miles below the point of the Delta. Here the Greeks bravely defended themselves for three days; but, being conquered in every battle, they fled hastily to St. Salstamus. From thence they retreated regularly for nineteen days with a skill and courage worthy of the pen of a Xenophon, bravely giving battle each day to

their pursuers. At Chereum, about twenty miles from the end of their journey, the two armies fought a pitched battle, when the Greeks were again routed and fled to Alexandria, having in about three weeks made good their retreat of one hundred and fifty miles in the face of a conquering army.

(47) The garrison of Alexandria, now joined by the garrisons of Babylon and Memphis, strengthened the fortifications, and got ready for a brave defence, while the Mahomedans prepared for a regular siege. The Greeks made daily sallies from the gates, which the Mahomedans as bravely repulsed; and on one occasion the Arabs followed so closely upon the heels of the retreating Greeks that the foremost of them entered the city with the fugitives, and when the gates closed Amrou the son of Asi found himself a prisoner with a handful of brave followers. "Now that you are wholly in our power," said the patrician of Alexandria, when they were brought before him, "what would you that we should do with you?" The haughty Mahomedan, speaking as conqueror rather than as a prisoner, replied, "You must either pay us a tribute, or embrace our religion, or one of us must die," and from his lofty bearing the Greeks began to guess his rank. But Amrou was saved by the presence of mind of one of his followers, who, slapping his general rudely on the face, ordered him to hold his peace before his betters; and he then persuaded the patrician to make use of them as messengers to carry proposals for a truce to the besiegers. The prisoners were accordingly sent away by the patrician with letters to Amrou, and when they reached the Mahomedan camp in safety and the air rung with the joyous cries of "God is great," the Greeks at last found out their mistake, that they had had their greatest enemy in their power, and had released him to their own destruction.

(48) The next assault was fatal to the besieged. The Mahomedans again entered the city, but in greater numbers; the garrison fled, some to their ships and some along the shore; and after a siege of fourteen months the Mahomedans were masters of Alexandria. Amrou then hastily and incautiously marched in pursuit of those who had quitted the city by land; when the ships, which had scarcely got out of the harbour, relanded the troops, and the Greeks again gained possession of the city and put to death the few Arabs

that were left to guard it. But Amrou as hastily returned from the pursuit of the fugitives, a second time stormed the walls after a severe struggle, and a second time drove the Greek garrison to their ships.

Eutychii Annales.

(49) Thus, on a Friday, the first day of the month of Moharra, being the new-year's day of the twentieth year of the Hegira, Egypt ceased to be a Greek, or, as it was still called, a Roman province. Amrou wrote word to the Caliph Omar, boasting that he had taken a city which beggared all description, in which he found four thousand palaces, four thousand public baths, four hundred theatres, twelve thousand sellers of herbs; and, having a thievish eye for Jewish industry, he added that there were forty thousand Jews paying tribute. Such was the store of wheat which he sent on camels' backs to Medina that the Arabic historian declares, in his usual style of eastern poetry, that the first of an unbroken line of camels entered the holy city before the last camel had left Egypt.

22 Decemb. A.D. 640.

(50) The Arabs may well have been startled at the beauty and wealth of their new conquest, which, notwithstanding the ruin brought on by its sieges and civil wars, was still crowded with wonders of art, the fruits of long civilisation. But to the mind of a Greek well stored with history Alexandria in its fall must have been viewed with a melancholy interest. To a traveller arriving by sea, the first object to strike his eye was the light-house on the low island of Pharos, that monument of the science and humanity of the first two Ptolemies, that has since been copied in every quarter of the habitable globe. Near it was the Heptastadium, a causeway of three quarters of a mile in length, that joined the island to the land, and divided the enclosed waters into two harbours. There were bridges over the passages which joined the two harbours; but the aqueduct which once brought fresh water to the island was in ruins. On landing and entering by the gate of the sun, the gate of the moon might be seen at the further side of the city, at the end of a straight street with a row of columns on each side. In this street stood the Sema, the mausoleum which held the body of Alexander, from whose death so many Greek cities and empires dated their rise, and of which Alexandria was the

Strabo, lib. xvii.

J. Malala, lib. xi. Achilles Tatius, v.

last to fall. A second street, crossing the former at the Tetrapylon, ran east and west from the Canobic gate to the gate of the Necropolis, and had also once been ornamented with columns through its whole length, till half of it had been ruined by the fortifications and sieges of the Bruchium. The new Museum, which had been built to replace that of the Ptolemies, had been very much deserted since the fall of paganism, its schools and spacious halls were empty; but in vain the traveller would seek for the humble building which once held the famed catechetical school of the Christians, and which contributed so largely to the desertion of its prouder neighbour. On the outside of the western gate was the Necropolis, whose memorials of the dead, both pagan and Christian, lined the road side and sea coast for two miles, and harmonized most truly with the faded glories of the city; while the Jews had a humble burial-place of their own, beyond the eastern gate. Near the western gate also, but within the walls, stood the famed temple of Serapis, second to no building in the world but the Roman Capitol, a monument of the rise and fall of religions, once the very citadel of paganism, now the cathedral of a Christian patriarch. In the centre of it stood, and indeed still stands, the lofty column of Diocletian, with an equestrian statue on the top, raised to record the conquering emperor's humanity and the gratitude of the citizens. Second among the larger buildings was the Sebaste, or Cæsar's temple, with two obelisks in front, which latter, having during the last two thousand years seen the downfall of the Egyptian superstition, and then been removed to Alexandria in honour of Greek polytheism, remained to ornament a Christian church. Among the other churches the chief were those of St. Mark, of St. Mary, of John the Baptist, of Theodosius, of Arcadius, and the temple of Bacchus. Along the sea shore to the east lay the ruined Hippodrome; and on the same side, where the canal from the Nile reached the city, were the fortified granaries, a little citadel by itself; and not far off were the old mounds that marked out what was once the camp of the legionaries, with here and there an idle column, brought in the time of Augustus for his proposed city of Nicopolis. The inhabitants were no longer numerous enough to use the whole space

Descript. de l'Egypte.

Pliny, lib. xxxvi. 14.

which the city, with its gardens, once covered. The Bruchium, with its fortifications, once a city of itself, was in ruins; and the Jews' quarter was nearly a desert, inhabited only by a despised few, from whom their persecutors wrung a tribute; the Jews bought of the Christians that leave to worship the God of their fathers which the Christians were thenceforth to buy of the Moslems.

Eutychii Annales.

(51) But great as was the ruin which had come upon Alexandria during the misrule of the Roman emperors, it was small to what afterwards befel it under the Arabs. As the city shrunk in size the Arabs surrounded it with a new fortification of a smaller circuit, which does not even include Diocletian's column; and the population has since that time again so much lessened, that the whole of the modern city now stands on the widened Heptastadium, the causeway that joins to the main land what was once the island of Pharos. When the traveller, in order to gain a better view of this celebrated spot, now climbs the hill on which the temple of Pan once stood, he sees the town wholly at a distance; and the only ancient monuments standing are Diocletian's column (see Fig. 140), and an obelisk which ornamented the temple of the Cæsars, now called Cleopatra's needle (see Fig. 141). At the same time the cultivated soil of the country, the fields which are watered either by the natural overflow of the river or by canals and pumps, is no more than three millions of acres, or less than one third of what it was in the time of its great kings.

Descript. de l'Egypte.

Fig. 140.

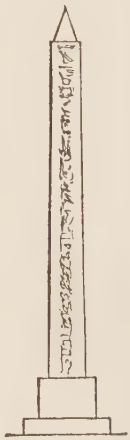


Fig. 141.

(52) The fate of the Alexandrian library still requires our attention. The first great library of that name, collected by the Ptolemies and placed in the Museum, in the quarter of the city called the Bruchium, was burnt by the soldiers of

Julius Cæsar. The second, which was formed round the library from Pergamus presented to Cleopatra by Mark Antony, was placed in the temple of Serapis; and, though that temple was twice burnt or at least injured by fire, once in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, and again in the reign of Commodus, the library was unhurt in the reign of Julian, when Ammianus was in Egypt; and it then amounted to seven hundred thousand volumes. But when the pagan worship was put down by Theodosius I., and the temple of Serapis was sacked by the Christians, the library was either dispersed or destroyed, and when Orosius was in Egypt, in the reign of Theodosius II., he saw the empty book-shelves. There were other large libraries in Alexandria, although we have no particular account of them. The Museum of the Bruchium was rebuilt, but again destroyed with that part of the city in the reign of Gallienus. The Sebaste or Cæsar's temple had a library. The Emperor Claudius built a second college, called the Claudian Museum, which no doubt had a library. As the public schools of pagan philosophy continued open until the reign of Justinian, as the astronomers continued to make their observations in Alexandria, and as the Christians wrote largely, though perhaps to little purpose, on controversial divinity, we can hardly believe that in a city so famed for its libraries the Museum should have been without one. The Arabic historian tells us that when Alexandria was conquered by Amrou he set his seal upon the public library, together with the other public property of the city. But John Philoponus begged that the books might be spared, as being of no use to the conquerors; and Amrou would have granted the request at once if he had not thought it necessary to ask leave of the caliph. He therefore wrote to Medina for orders, and the Caliph Omar answered him that, if the books in the Alexandrian library were the same as the Koran, they were useless, and if not the same they were worse than useless, and that in either case they were to be burnt. Amrou obeyed this order, and sent the books, most of which were of papyrus, to the public baths of the city, and the Arabic historian, in the poetic style of his nation, says that the baths were heated by them for the space of six months.

Abul-Pharag. Dyn. ix.

Abdallatif, cap. iv.

(53) In these pages we have carefully followed the last faint traces of the old Egyptian arts and religion, and henceforth the very language begins to fall into disuse. The Arabic portion of the population at once rose into importance, as we before saw the Greek portion rise on the conquest of the country by Alexander the Great. The Coptic manuscripts of the Bible soon had an Arabic translation added on the same page, that while the services of the church were conducted in the ancient language the people might understand it by the help of the Arabic. Greek civilisation and literature, which had flourished in Egypt for nine hundred years, at once came to an end; and the annals of science, of the Coptic church, and of the government, are henceforth to be found only in the Arabic historians. Alexandria then ceased to be an European colony. As for the Romans, they left no traces of their ever having ruled in the country; for, even before the seat of government was removed from Rome, Egypt was always governed as a Greek province; and afterwards, while the emperors dwelt at Constantinople, they were Roman in nothing but in name, and in the language of the laws and coins. On the fall of Alexandria, Egypt became a part of the great kingdom of the caliphs, and its history a part of the history of Arabia and the Arabs.

(54) It is worth remarking that of the temples and palaces and castles built with so much care in the earlier ages of the world, more have been destroyed by the industrious hand of the stonemason than have fallen to pieces through neglect. Long before this conquest by the Arabs, the Thebaid was going to decay, its population was lessened in numbers, and therefore its temples, though plundered and ill-treated, were left majestic in their ruins to tell their tale to the wondering traveller. Lower Egypt was not so neglected either by its own people or by its conquerors, and therefore far worse has been the fate of the equally grand buildings of that part of the country. The eastern half of the Delta had always been full of Asiatics; and there the Phenician shepherd kings had of old fixed the seat of their garrison, when they made the frightened Egyptians pay them tribute; and there also, and probably nearly on the same spot, the Moslem Arabs now chose a site for their new capital. The Arabic city of Musr was built close upon the city of Babylon, half way between

Memphis and Heliopolis. It was also called Cairo. But a little later a new capital, still called Cairo, was built on a spot yet nearer to Heliopolis; and then Musr received the name of Old Cairo. And as Sais and Naucratis had before been cruelly rifled by Alexandria for building stones, so the temples of Alexandria and Memphis and Heliopolis were one by one pulled to pieces to make the mosques and graceful minarets and citadel walls of Old and New Cairo. There we may count four hundred Greek columns from Alexandria, ornamenting a Turkish mosque. There we may see a slab carved with praises of Thothmosis sawn in half to form a door-step, while another, with an inscription by the sun-worshipping Thaomra, forms part of a garden wall. The door-posts of the mosques are often columns from a temple of Pthah or Serapis. Even the streets in the few places where paving is used are paved with stones which were once most holy. The granite obelisk of Rameses, and the head-stone of the temple portico, carved with the winged sun and sacred asps, together pave the city gateway, and are worn smooth by the busy feet of the Arab's donkey, and the silent tread of his camel.

(55) Thus has been pulled to pieces and levelled with the ground every building of the city of Memphis. The foundations of its walls and the lines of its streets may be traced in the cultivated fields; but little or nothing rises above the plain but the one colossus of Rameses II, so huge that as it lies with its face upon the ground its back may be seen high above the standing corn with which it is surrounded (see Fig. 142). No works of man's hands now remain to us to

Fig. 142.—Colossal statue of Rameses II.

prove that on this cornfield once stood a crowded city teeming with life, except its tombs upon the neighbouring hills. There the pyramids still stand, scarcely lessened in size and

not the least in grandeur, by the loss of the stone casing which was carried off to Cairo. From Cairo the traveller sees them like specks on the horizon. As he rides towards them over the plain, which was once the city of Memphis,

Fig. 143.

they rise in height, and their outline becomes more marked: and when he reaches the base of the nearest, he looks up in astonishment and awe. He has had his wonder raised higher every step as he approached it, and when he arrives at its

foot he feels no disappointment, his expectations are fully satisfied. The sublime in art can hardly do more.

(56) When he has climbed to the top of the lofty pile, by means of the steps which remain now that the casing stones have been removed, he looks round upon a landscape as cheerful on one side as it is dreary on the other. On the east he sees a cultivated plain dotted with villages and palm trees. Through this winds the blue river, and beyond it lies the range of Mokattam hills, tipped at one end with the citadel of Cairo. On the west side there is nothing but the dry desert, everywhere the same to the eye, and dreadfully glaring. There are no signs of the once great city of Memphis. There is no longer to be seen a row of priests in mournful procession carrying out a bull, the deceased Apis, embalmed for its burial, nor a troop of dancers and singers following a new Apis that is being brought into the

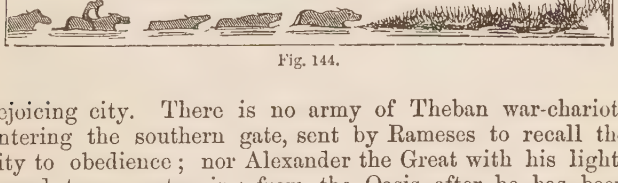


Fig. 144.

rejoicing city. There is no army of Theban war-chariots entering the southern gate, sent by Rameses to recall the city to obedience; nor Alexander the Great with his light-armed troops returning from the Oasis after he has been proclaimed a child of the sun. No signs of life are now to be seen at the foot of the pyramid but such as have belonged to the valley as long as the Nile has been known to man, whether governed by a Pharaoh, a Ptolemy, a Cæsar, or a Caliph. You will see nothing more important than a string of camels with their Arab drivers (see Fig. 143) winding over the sands, such as brought Joseph there to be sold as a slave, or, if the fields are at the time covered by the Nile's overflow, a herd of buffaloes coming up out of the water, such as Pharaoh saw in his dream (see Fig. 144).

(57) The children of the men whose doings we have been studying are still to be traced among their ruined

monuments, though driven somewhat southward by the new comers. The country is governed by a handful of Turks from Constantinople, who are of the same race as the Scythians that overran Palestine and frightened Egypt in the reign of Psammetichus I., and against whom Rameses II. had before fought. Under them are the Moslem Arabs, who marched from Medina under Amrou, and wrested the province from the Greeks. They have ornamented their beautiful Cairo with mosques and minarets; and among them are gentlemen, soldiers and scholars. In the ill-paid Fellahs (see Fig. 145) who cultivate the soil and work the

Pickering's Races of Men.

Fig. 145.

boats and water-wheels, who live in mud hovels, wearing very little clothing, we see the unprivileged class, that has laboured under various masters from very early times, unnoticed by the historian. These are the same in the form of skull as the Galla tribe of East Africa, and were probably the earliest inhabitants of the valley. Such were the builders of the pyramids at Memphis, as we learn by comparing their heads with that of the great sphinx. They suffer under the same plagues of boils and blains, of lice and of flies, as in

the time of Moses. Their bodies are painted with various colours, pricked into their skin, as they were when the Israelites were forbidden to make any marks upon the flesh. In the industrious Copts, the Christians of the villages, the counting-house, and the monastery, with skull and features half European and half Eastern, we have the old Egyptian race of the Delta, the ruling class, such as it was in the days of Psammetichus and Shishank. Between Silsilis and the second cataract we find, under the name of Nubians, the same old Egyptian race, but less mixed with Greeks or Arabs. Such were the Nabatæ who fought against Diocletian, and such in features were the kings of Thebes, Rameses and Thothmosis, and the kings of Ethiopia, Sabacothph and Ergamenes. We know them by their likeness to the statues, and by their proud contempt of the Fellahs. These two races, the Copts and Nubians, are the men who built the temples, made the mummies, and carved the hieroglyphics. When they reached the valley of the Nile, it had no doubt been long peopled by the Fellahs. They were both zealous Christians under Athanasius; but Christianity has only remained among the mixed race of Copts. To the east of the Nile near Cosseir, and again throughout the whole of Ethiopia from Abou Simbel to Meroë, are the Ababdeh Arabs, brave and lawless. These were the southern enemy conquered by Rameses, and they often fought against the Romans. They are the owners of the camels now, as they used to be; and are the carriers across the sands of the desert. To the south of Syene, in the desert between Ethiopia and the Red Sea, are the less civilised marauding Bishareen Arabs, the Blemmyes and Troglodytæ of the Greeks. These Arabs seem to be less at home on the banks of the Nile than the Copts and Nubians. They no doubt reached the valley at some later period, when the others were already settled there; and reached not by passing through Egypt, but by crossing over from the Arabian side of the Red Sea. In Abyssinia we find a people in features and in language more Hebrew than Arabic; the people whom Frumentius found there in the reign of Constantine, and the people for whom the Ethiopic version of the Bible was made, whose forefathers reached the country in the trading vessels from Ezion Geber in the reign of Solomon, or earlier.

Among the various Bedouins of northern Arabia the Tor Arabs of Sinai are probably the friendly tribe, perhaps miscalled Midianites, who guided Moses as far as Ezion Geber on the Gulf of Akaba; and the Alawin are the hostile Edomites who would not allow him to pass through Petra. Alexandria is still peopled with sullen Copts, clever Greeks, shabby-looking Jews, with here and there a glossy negro in a white dress. The Christian monks live in peace among the Moslem dervishes. The ruling class who walk along the street with proudest and firmest step are the Turks in gay many-coloured clothing, while the poor of the city, as of old, are the half-naked brown-skinned Fellahs.

Bartlett's Forty Days in the Desert.

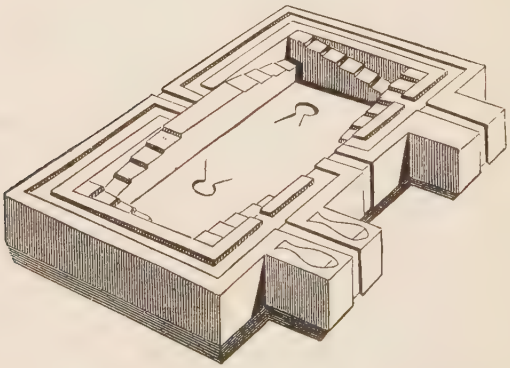


Fig. 146.—A sacrificial basin in form of a tank or artificial lake.

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THE END.

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